

# **FUTUROLOGY F I A S C O**

**A Critical Study  
of Non-Marxist Concepts  
of How Society Develops**

●  
**Progress  
Publishers**

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A Critical Study  
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of How Society Develops

Translated  
by Vic Schneerson



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**ФИАСКО ФУТУРОЛОГИИ**  
Критический анализ  
немарксистских концепций  
общественного развития

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In a previous book\* I tried to trace the leading social trends of our time and sketch in the foreseeable future on the evidence provided by Soviet and foreign Marxist-Leninist studies, and the theory of scientific communism. My attention was concentrated on economic, social, and political material, while the various futurological concepts were dealt with only casually.

It hardly needs proving, however, that ideological polemic—important for any scientific search—is especially significant when looking at the shape of things to come. No view of the future, however progressive and authentic, can capture the public mind (which is essential for its realisation) unless the ground is cleared, positive leads are carefully weighed, and misconceptions are effectively refuted.

This study is conceived, in effect, as a modest contribution to such a clearing of the ground.

Futurology originated in the West as a specific academic discipline to provide an immediate alternative to the Marxist-Leninist, communist ideas about the future society. It was no natural offspring born at a point where a new branch of science hives off from the general body of knowledge. It was rather a peculiar hybrid artificially produced by the bourgeois social sciences (political economy, philosophy, sociology, law, political science, and psychology) to meet a generously rewarded demand. Unlike any genuine science that arrives at the truth at the end of the road, futurology has an anteriorly posited result to which it must suit the facts.

True, futurologists usually make the counter-charge that the Marxist notions of the future, too, repose on the predetermined

\* See Georgi Shakhnazarov, *The Destiny of the World. The Socialist Shape of Things to Come*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979.



idea of communism. The difference is, however, that communism is not a product of pure deduction. It does not logically follow from the conviction that progress is preordained, and it does not, unlike the utopias, try to impose any ethical ideal. Marxism discovered the premises of socialism budding in capitalist society. Its working hypothesis of the future is rooted in the social trends of the present day. Furthermore, the more than sixty years' experience of the human race since the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, has borne out its chief conclusions. History has, in fact, authoritatively certified the truth of scientific communism.

The futurologists, on the other hand, are out to prove the reverse—to construct and authenticate a non-communist future. This one reason strips futurology of the right to call itself a true science. But there are also other reasons. For one thing, prognostication is an inalienable function of each and every science. More, it is its chief function. To deny this is, in fact, to emasculate science. The operation would also negatively affect prognostication itself: separated from the paternal methodological base it would be cut off from its vital essence, would inevitably become self-contained, and go to seed.

To estimate the outlook in production and marketing, for example, one must have a good knowledge of the objective economic laws, that is, be an expert not in futurology but in political economy and current economics. Yet there is hardly a scientist who could deal in different spheres of social activity with equal insight.

Marxists are not alone in denying the claim of futurology to being a science in its own right. French sociologist Alain Gras, for example, says futurology is no real science, mainly because it is intimately linked with the policy of the ruling élites and is chiefly concerned with the 'technique of preserving power' (see Gras, *'La futurologie'*, in Collection *Clefs*, Paris, 1976).

All this is not meant to deny the useful and necessary novelties in studying the future. Least of all prognostication, an auxiliary methodological pursuit engaged in selecting and perfecting various methods of anticipation, establishing the criteria of their relative efficiency, and so on. Or comprehensive purpose-oriented studies of short- or longer-term prospects engaged in collectively by experts in various fields, in the absence of which modern planning would be impossible. Or co-ordinative scientific panels and administrative institutions that organise exchange of knowledge and join forces for purpose-oriented breakthroughs into the future.

The time futurology came into the world was exceptionally propitious for it. Capitalism seemed to have gained its second wind

through the scientific-technical revolution, and cybernetics was in its early prime, searching for pastures to apply its limitless possibilities. The demand for an image of the future contrary to the Marxian had existed long before, but priorly bourgeois science had not dared tackling the problem. It had neither the inspiration for it, nor the resources. What future could it predict for the capitalist system during the Great Depression or when fascism reared and war was imminent? What ray could it project to the future when theories were shot through with puritan positivism and reduced to merely registering the social phenomena?

Then everything changed. The favourable post-war situation created by the generous achievements of science and technology seemed to hold a happy promise of long life for the capitalist system, even of perpetuating it at the price of comparatively painless transformation. This on the one hand. On the other, the tempting opportunity appeared to broaden the horizons of theoretical thought, and this without abandoning the familiar positivist ground. Wasn't it, indeed, a seductive proposition to replace the rule-of-thumb gathering and processing of facts with a powerful and sophisticated computer, a memorising device that could absorb any amount of information and disgorge all sorts of forecasts—from the probable price of oil next year to the per capita GNP at the end of the twentieth century or the ratio of demand and supply to the availability of natural resources 150 years hence?

Few could resist this temptation, and futurology mustered to its banners, practically overnight, nearly all the leading lights from different branches of bourgeois social science. And having so enthusiastically rushed to this Futureland, this new Eldorado, they naturally posted their claims with alacrity and carved themselves niches of celebrity with monumental theories. Then the working of quagmire logic became their undoing: if the facts departed from their scenario they threw in more arguments to buttress it, and insisted that it was impeccable all the same and would ultimately all come true.

Today, futurology presents a strange sight; the dizzy delights over its ephemeral omnipotence have given way to a rude awakening. But some of the illusions are still alive and, besides, the huge capital—chiefly intellectual—that has been invested in it is still yielding some dividends.

According to sociologist Robert Jungk, futurology 'will probably do less for the "future" than for the immediate present'. It should be regarded, he says, more as a search than a find, a game with suppositions rather than a source of

reliable forecasts, as a project rather than a plan, a watcher of the process rather than a definer of aims (Jungk, 'Zukunftsforscher und Zukunftsverhinderer', in *Merkur* Stuttgart, May 1969, p. 495).

Half science and half mystique, futurology is a domain where unmistakable charlatans rub shoulders with serious thinkers. Its products are a bizarre mixture of valuable observations, quasi-scientific nonsense, and anti-communist fabrications of the foulest. And the future of futurology itself depends on many things—first of all on how, at what rate, the process of the world's social renewal will unfold. The good and valuable that futurology has produced will necessarily merge with the science of socialism and communism.

At this juncture, however, there is every reason to maintain that despite a discovery and triumph here and there, futurology is a fiasco as concerns its main purpose: it has failed to disprove the Marxist idea of the shape of things to come.

And that, precisely, is the topic of this book, projected in two directions:

First, it will deal with the principal non-Marxist concepts that come under the general head of 'techno-idyllic pictures of the future', one of the sub-divisions of which reposes on the idea that the two social systems—capitalism and socialism—are converging. This is adjoined by 'democratic socialism' as conceived by the Social Democrats.

Second, it will deal with the essential problems (or dilemmas) of our time that are at the focus of the battle of ideas about the future between the social classes and political currents of the present day.

This dual approach (one ramification dealing with concepts and the other with problems) will, it seems to me, cast light on certain important nooks and crannies that have so far escaped the attention of scholars, though, to be fair, in recent years Soviet and other Marxists have produced a more or less exhaustive critique of the concepts forming the core of futurology.

## Part One FALSE ALTERNATIVES

### CH. I. TECHNO-IDYLIC CONCEPTS

Throughout the history of the organised workers' movement, and especially after socialism was transformed from theory into practice, the bourgeoisie, its science and its propaganda machine, have tried in all manner of refined ways to prove that Marxism-Leninism was without foundation and that its pivotal conclusion—the inevitability of proletarian revolution and substitution of the socialist for the capitalist system—had no basis in fact. Fortunes were spent on this. A powerful ideological apparatus was built. A precious potential of human intelligence was expended. All in vain. In each new lap of the process of history fresh proof appeared to confirm Marxist-Leninist theory (with correctives, of course, for no science can escape them), consigning to the burial-ground the canny constructions of logic that were designed to refute it.

To be sure, there has been a distinct change of course in bourgeois social science. It began before the war, and was completed after the war was over: virtually all its branches changed their pivotal idea more or less simultaneously. Until then they had rejected the very idea of socialism being inevitable, and argued that capitalism had enough resources to survive for an indefinitely long time. Now, they began to admit that, like any other social system, capitalism was mortal and would one day give place to another system, a much more socialised one in all areas—but not to the socialism described in Marxist-Leninist theory and carried into practice in the Soviet Union and a number of other countries.

The idea gradually became stratified, and produced an arsenal of diverse arguments—all depending on the distinctive political aims and professional skills of the various scholarly groups. Some said the transformation of capitalism had already run its course. Some said it had so far occurred in the United States only, and others held it was still a thing of the future. Some proudly reca-

pitulated the accomplishments of the 'consumer society', some (slightly more reasonably) enumerated its flaws and called for reforms, and others maintained that there was nothing more to reform if 'freedom was not to be sacrificed to equality'.

But all of them equally worshipped the omnipotence of scientific and technical progress, viewing it as the be-all and end-all, the absolute instrument for improving society. That gave rise to the concept of 'social engineering', even 'social technology'. Here, ultimately, all modern futurological theories converged.

Suppose we abstract ourselves from the particular points, and synthesise their essence. We will then find that the present era is viewed not as an era of class struggle, but one in which scientific and technical progress wholly and completely determines all varieties of the social order. Social movements become meaningless. To say nothing of revolutions. Why, indeed, take that arduous road which often involves considerable human and material losses and causes turmoil in the social structure if the same aims can be reached through ordinary evolution within the framework of the existing social and political institutions and traditions? This 'discovery' signifies that mankind is intended to bypass the stage of socialism. Socialism is no longer needed. It is a dead end, a particular variety of evolution that is better avoided on the way to the summits of civilisation by a different, more economical path. In short, socialism is depicted as a fruitless offshoot, much like the Neanderthal man in the genesis of *homo sapiens*.

If the techno-idyllic concepts amounted to just this obvious ideological absurdity, they would not be worthy of attention. But things are not that simple. Nearly all the techno-idyllic theories contain some positive material—historical, economic, sociological and, especially, scientific and technical—of use for the social sciences. And Marxist-Leninist scholars are always rational in their treatment of other schools of social thought, showing their misconceptions but utilising every grain of true knowledge. Nor have I any cause to go against this good tradition here.

There is one more reason why I think the techno-idyllic concepts deserve a close, impartial look. Their ideological content is not the same in all cases. Some are boorishly anti-communist. Anti-communist emotions blind their authors to an extent where their theories become more like the ravings of a paranoic. Other authors prefer to lead their readers to the same conclusions by more devious and subtle means, giving their symbol of faith the appearance of scientific truth obtained by sound and unbiassed methods. Lastly, there are some who altogether avoid unambiguous

ideological judgements, parading their scientific probity, or perhaps their state of uncertainty, and refusing to burden their conscience with dubious truths or half-truths.

Still, despite these distinctions, and despite the marks of their authors' peculiar manner, the common features of all the techno-idyllic concepts tend to take precedence. Let us begin with their structure. Nearly all of them consist of two parts—the analytical, which contains an evaluation of the current state of affairs in society, and the futurological, which suggests a more or less integral concept of the future or, at least, a set of futurities or guesses about specific aspects of the social, scientific, or technical perspectives.

The identity of the substance and structure of the techno-idyllic concepts is not accidental. They are sisters in spirit, in world outlook, and in class bias. They have a common historical background. They originated within one and the same period as a response to one and the same social or, more precisely, the same class demand.

Certainly, it would be over-simplifying matters to say that all their makers are consciously on the 'other side of the fence', and that they are opposed without reservations to any and all revolutionary change, any and all social progress. On the contrary, some declare themselves heralds of new social overturns and quite honestly believe that they are resolute revolutionaries. But that is an aberration of their political vision, the unconscious self-deceit that abounds in history, with perfectly decent men counting themselves in the progressive camp while, in effect, they are firmly installed in the camp that is hostile to progress. But irrespective of what the authors of the techno-idyllic concepts may think of themselves, their notions are (in essence if not in detail) either counter-revolutionary or at least anti-revolutionary.

One more conspicuous element the futurological concepts have in common stems from their theoretical origins. Daniel Bell, father of the concept of 'post-industrial society', identifies none other than Saint-Simon as the forerunner of his school. It would be more right, however, to trace the economic side of the techno-idyllic concepts to John Keynes, and their sociological ideas to Auguste Comte and Max Weber. Bourgeois positivism is that common source of affinity that relates James Burnham's 'managerial revolution' to Walt Rostow's 'stages of economic growth', Kenneth Galbraith's 'transformation of property', Raymond Aron's 'industrial society', Zbigniew Brzezinski's 'technetronic era', Jean Fourastié's 'tertiary civilisation', and all the other techno-projects with their ebullient titles —'post-civilised era', 'post-Christian' or



'post-capitalist' society, 'consumer society', 'welfare society', and so on.

Directly related to the above, though they are not strictly futurological theories and though their authors modestly disclaim this high honour, are the 'revolutionary' fantasies of Jacques Ellul and Erich Fromm's attempt to wed Marxism and Freud, Herbert Marcuse's theory of student revolution, Burrhus Skinner's cultural designing, and many other projects of the same type.

Since politico-ideological teachings are often (and probably above all) related among themselves by their common objection to some other teaching or, more precisely, to a common adversary, the first point in our analysis should concern the attitude of the techno-idyllists to Marxism-Leninism. No doubt should remain in our minds on this score. The vast majority of futurists have declared their opposition to Marxist theory in no uncertain terms, and have given notice that they intend to create an alternative to the kind of future that is predicted by scientific communism.

We may recall, for example, that Rostow's book, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, had this second title: *A Non-Communist Manifesto* (The University Press, Cambridge, 1960), that Louis O. Kelso and Mortimer J. Adler entitled their book *The Capitalist Manifesto* (Random House, New York, 1958), and that Adolf A. Berle's book was called *The 20th Century Capitalist Revolution* (Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1954). Other mortal enemies of Marxism who are, however, compelled to admit its popularity, ascribe the latter, like Raymond Aron, to its being a 'secular religion' whose 'zealous pursuit and geographic spread' is comparable to that of Islam.\*

Antipathy has never been a valid argument. The widespread faith in Marxism (which may be legitimately described as faith in justice and progress) derives first of all from the correct answers it supplies to issues that are troubling people in the twentieth century, and also from the fact that all its essential predictions are coming true.

Certain futurological brethren admit that Marxism is an important stepping-stone in the cognition of the social mechanism, that Marxist ideas have greatly influenced political theory, and that they have helped to apprehend the weight of the economic factor in the life of society. But the basic principles of Marxism, they declare, though possibly correct for the nineteenth century, are outdated for the twentieth, and useless for forecasting the future.

\* Aron, *Progress and Disillusion*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1972, p. 277.

These men tend even to admit the influence that Marxism, and primarily dialectics, has had on the origin of various futurological concepts. Some, like Daniel Bell, go so far as to flaunt confessions of that sort (see 'The Post-Industrial Society: Evolution of an Idea', in *Survey*, No. 2, 1971).

Galbraith says that because Marx 'was so long forbidden to honest thought, honesty and courage are now associated with the full acceptance of his system'. This declaration (in *Economics and the Public Purpose*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1973) is nothing but a tribute to current fashion, for including Marx among one's teachers is in a way becoming a mark of good taste. It tends to show the tolerance of the Establishment, yet imposes no strings but for the one obligation, for appearances sake, to drop a few 'Marxist expressions' at international symposia.

Here is an interesting detail in Galbraith's own portrait. An Italian journalist approached him with this half-question and half-statement of fact: 'You could be described as a socialist non-Marxist. You are a socialist because you deny the self-regulating mechanisms in the private enterprise economy. And you are no Marxist because you do not attribute any special significance to Marxism from the point of view of its reformative capacity in our time. Do you accept this description?' The reply: 'It appears to be correct' (*Expansion*, No. 4, 1972).

To fail to use the Marxist-Leninist system as a base for examining social phenomena is, in substance, the same as to ignore Einstein in modern physics or to spurn Mendeleyev's periodic system of classifying chemical elements. And the fact that most futurologists have taken this obscurantist approach only reaffirms the Marxist idea that social science is partisan if not partial.

Now, as we begin our critical analysis of the techno-idyllic concepts, it will probably be useful to see how they treat the topic of the productive forces and relations of production, what they say about the social structure of society, what they think of government and culture, how their authors deal with the methods of progress (evolution, revolution), and what solutions they offer to global problems.

Here we might single out the following basic futurological tenets.

*Tenet 1.* Thanks to the breakthrough in the field of gathering and processing information and of organising management, scientific and technical progress has become omnipotent. Henceforth it will be the principal determinant of social development, and therefore the sole criterion of the relative advancement or backwardness of countries and nations, and of the state of humanity in natural space and historical time.

Take this expressive utterance:

'Today, the most industrially advanced countries (in the first instance, the United States),' says Zbigniew Brzezinski, 'are beginning to emerge from the industrial stage of their development. They are entering an age in which technology and especially electronics—hence my neologism "technetronic"—are increasingly becoming the principal determinants of social change, altering the mores, the social structure, the values, and the global outlook of society.'\*

Daniel Bell assumes that the axis of property creates radical differences between the United States and the Soviet Union. The axis of production and technology, on the other hand, determines their resemblance as industrial societies. The 'post-industrial society' concept emphasises the central place occupied by technical knowledge, which is the axis for new technology, for economic growth, and for the stratification of society. No exhaustive evaluation of a country can be given on the strength of just one of its characteristic features, says Bell. Marx, he adds, was wrong when he defined a system as capitalist and deduced all other relations—cultural, religious, and political—from this basis (see the *art. cit.*, in *Survey*, No 2, 1971). Bell insists on different systems of evaluation. Faulting Marx for what he termed his one-sidedness, the American professor, in effect, immediately forgot his own plea for a 'plurality of determinants' and proclaimed industrial development the principal and axial line of progress. All human history is squeezed by him into the formula of pre-industrial—industrial—post-industrial society.

What is there to say about this basic tenet of all techno-idyllic concepts? To begin with, the outstanding part played by science and technology in our age is incontestable. Marx and Lenin attached tremendous significance to the development of science and technology. The Marxist thought of recent decades has profoundly studied all aspects of the scientific-technical revolution and its relation to social revolution, and, among other things, demonstrated the growth of science into an immediate productive force in its own right.

Neither can there be any objection to the idea that societies should be compared by other, as well as social determinants. In assessing industrial or technical development, for example, Marxists employ the comparative notions of economically

\* Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages, America's Role in the Technetronic Era*, The Viking Press, New York, 1970, p. xiv.

underdeveloped and developed states. This should be evidence enough that Marxists have always measured progress along what Bell described as the 'axial lines'. Not just social but many other criteria are used to gauge the differences in the level of culture, democracy, and so on.

Bell is tilting at wind mills when he labours to assert the primacy of industrial advance. Marx and Engels were the first to note the priority of the productive forces in the mechanism of social progress. But they showed that the role of the productive forces manifested itself not directly but through the economic basis of society. This point, the most essential in the entire Marxist teaching, the authors of the techno-idyllic concepts prefer to ignore. The result is a squalid picture of the mechanics of social progress—in many ways more squalid and primitive than that of the eighteenth-century materialists.

The premise that the 'technical axis' is of prime significance for an understanding of the stage of social development as a whole, is fundamentally incorrect. True, the eras that preceded civilisation are defined according to the implements and materials that powered the gradual transformation of the ape into a thinking creature. Hence the concept of the Stone and Bronze ages, and that of the pre-Promethean age and the fire age. In the time since the emergence of civilisation, too, stages are singled out to show humanity's progress in conquering and harnessing nature, such as the steam age, the age of electricity, the electronic age, the space age, and so on.

But none of these characteristics is conclusive. If any of them were, there would be rivalry between the various fields of science and technology, for each would claim the chief credit for conquering the forces of nature and embellishing the human existence. Physicists see our age as nuclear, chemists as the age of synthetic materials, and for biologists it is the age of the living cell. Though each of these definitions is legitimate in its own way, they are all more in the nature of publicistic designations rather than scientific formulas that could serve as a characteristic of the current era.

A valid characteristic for the period related to the stratification of society into classes and the elimination of this stratification can be produced only on the basis of social criteria, and certainly not technical ones. Suppose we take the fairly long period of slavery and feudalism. According to the 'technical scheme' there had been no substantial change throughout that period, for man confined himself throughout to the same sources of energy (draught

animals, wind), known for thousands of years. Yet it was precisely in the Middle Ages that a substantial change occurred in the pattern of economic and political life, leading to the conclusion that society passed from slavery to feudalism.

Perhaps, then, we ought to at least accept Bell's initial conjecture that all 'axial lines' are more or less equivalent. For in that case it is quite possible that there will be a post-industrial capitalist and a post-industrial socialist society (Bell, by the way, allowed for this possibility). Yet then the whole thing boils down to the idea that both socialism and capitalism can utilise the achievements of the scientific-technical revolution in accordance with the stage of maturity of their socio-economic system. The question of capitalism or socialism, however, hangs fire, and we are back where we started.

If, on the other hand, we take Bell at his word and accept the primacy of the scientific and technical 'axial line' over the social—an idea nursed by all futurologists—we will not be able to explain how opposite socio-political structures arose in societies that are scientifically and technically homogeneous. For if scientific and technical progress predetermines identical development in the present and future, why has it not done so in the past?

The reply may be that the matter is tied up with the scientific-technical revolution, which has given the influence of science on social processes a new dimension. But that is a hollow argument. For the scientific-technical revolution is, ultimately, a principal factor in the development of the productive forces, nothing more. The authors of techno-idyllic theories might argue that the productive forces had not influenced social change in the past, but have begun to do so now. But this double standard in relation to the objective laws of social development does not stand up to criticism. What we see here is the obvious wish to adapt the facts to the desired answer, and least of all a wish to determine the real state of affairs.

*Tenet 2.* The scientific-technical revolution has caused a radical swing in the structure of production, paving the way to technical solutions of social problems.

But what do futurologists imply by this radical swing? The shift of the centre of gravity from production of goods to production of services.

The economic theory that scientific and technical progress, which laid the ground for unlimited production of relatively cheap consumer goods, was steadily lowering employment in the primary and secondary sectors of economy, that is, in industry and farming,

was first formulated in the forties. The effect on services, on the other hand, was practically negligible, for here production was based mainly on individual effort and craftsmanship, which submitted to mechanisation only partially and which totally ruled out automation.

The time and labour that goes into, say, making a loom have been reduced to a fraction of their former value, whereas the barber, tailor, cook and others employed in the sphere of services use practically as much time and labour per operation as a hundred years ago. Yet the demand for their services is rising, because society is growing more prosperous.

The service-producing sector is also expanding because of the growth of the health services, public education, research, management or, in other words, practically the entire sphere of public employment that produces no goods itself but indirectly, by intermediate factors, strongly influences material production.

From this essentially correct observation (the magnitude of which, however, they greatly exaggerated), the futurologists drew two rash and unacceptable conclusions.

First, that by continuously expanding the services created a continuously growing demand for manpower and were thus able to absorb the entire labour force that became redundant through the introduction of automation in industry and of industrial methods in agriculture. Hence unemployment would soon be a thing of the past, and the cataclysms it generated will no longer imperil the capitalist system.

The other conclusion was that in the setting of the scientific-technical revolution the economic mechanism regulated the incomes sphere on its own and brought about a gradual levelling of incomes, or at least narrowed the gaps. Since, futurologists said, the range of consumption among the lower classes was limited mainly to food and a few vitally necessary manufactured items, it was the lower classes who benefited the most from the declining price of consumer goods. Whereas, with services constantly rising in price, the burden of this fell on the more prosperous groups. Hence an automatic levelling of the incomes of the lower and higher social groups.

This was the sort of picture that impressed itself on the minds of certain futurologists of the forties and fifties, among them Jean Fourastié, who described his radiant visions in *The Great Hope of the 20th Century* (in 1946), *Histoire de demain* (in collaboration with Claude Viment in 1956), *Révolution à l'Ouest* (in collaboration with André Laleuf in 1957), and *La civilisation de 1975* (in



1959). But the time that has elapsed since then refuted the more basic forecasts of the optimistically oriented futurologists.

First, it turned out that unemployment was not declining despite the continuous growth of services. Second, far from shrinking, the incomes gap was wide, with the rate of enrichment in the small upper sector of society rising far more rapidly than the general standard of living.

This forced the techno-idyllists of the second and third generations to introduce a few correctives. The idea that social change was automatically generated by scientific and technical progress was replaced with notions about 'social engineering' and, later, 'social technology'. This was meant to say that the scientific-technical revolution was no blind tool of Providence that had come to the aid of capitalism, that capitalism should not sit on its hands, that monopoly and the state should apply considered and deliberate effort, and that social activity had to be regulated to stabilise the system.

But back to the futurists' predictions about the service sector. Statistics showed that employment in services was rising continuously. Inflamed by statistical curves, techno-idyllists projected the growth trend far into the future. But practice proved that the staggering conclusions they made in their blind faith in figures were full of flaws.

In 1870, official figures show, 10,630,000 Americans were employed in the goods-producing sector (manufacturing and mining, agriculture, forestry, fishing, and construction) and only 2,990,000 in the service-producing sector (trade, finance, transportation, utilities, professional services, domestic and personal services, and government). In 1940, the figures were 25,610,000 and 24,250,000 respectively, and in 1968 they were 28,975,000 and 51,800,000. Projected to 1980, they were given as 31,600,000 for the goods-producing sector and 67,980,000 for the service-producing sector, including 25,140,000 in trade and finance, and 21,000,000 in health, education, business, and other personal and professional services.\*

If the trend continues, futurologists expect three-fourths of the gainfully employed Americans to be earning their living in the service-producing sphere by the end of the century.\*\*

The figures look impressive: more than 60 per cent of the em-

ployed are in services. But the techno-idyllic forecasts do not merely concern the growth of the service-producing sector, but are meant to show that this growth relative to goods production will enable services to absorb the redundant labour force and level up incomes. But why, despite the significant growth of services, has the sector failed to live up to the futurologists' hopes?

The fact of the matter is that no effect or consequences of the scientific-technical revolution can abrogate the objective economic laws of capitalism. Capitalist production has to have a reserve army of workers. This enables employers profitably to regulate terms of hire. Absence of such a reserve army would eliminate the chief stimulant of capitalist activity. Even if services were able to provide full employment, the capitalists would, therefore, artificially maintain a certain rate of unemployment.

Strange though this sounds, it is a fact. Britain and West Germany are importing labour, and this despite the high unemployment figures in both countries. Foreign workers have the dirtiest and lowest-paid jobs. In industrialised capitalist states unemployment is in many ways a functional thing, deriving from the low demand for some types of skilled labour.

As for closing the incomes gap, the growing service-producing sector failed to live up to the futurists' hopes for two reasons. First, because statistics refers to services everything unrelated to the making of goods and piles various groups of brain workers employed chiefly in government under the same head as the private sector in trade and the crafts. Yet the growing numbers of the former do not stimulate the gap-closing tendency because the incomes of most government employees are no higher than those of industrial workers.

Some futurists object to the ploy of inferring the 'special role' of services from U. S. statistics. They hold it far more accurate to limit the service-producing sector to purely economic activities. Galbraith, for example, objects to the idea that the United States is a 'service society'. He notes, furthermore, that along with exploitation of the labour of others, self-exploitation is extremely important for the survival of the small firm in modern capitalist society.\*

The other flaw of the idea that the service-producing sphere can help close the incomes gap lies on the surface. It is naive to assume that the higher cost of services can in any way lessen the difference

\* See Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, Basic Books Publishers, New York, 1973.

\*\* See Russell Lewis, *The New Service Society*, Longman, London, 1973.

\* See John Galbraith, *Economics and the Public Purpose*, Boston, 1973, pp. 55, 73.

between the incomes of the groups at the polar ends of the spectrum. It hits middle strata. But it is painless for the big fortunes which, moreover, are increasing at a much higher rate.

*Tenet 3.* The techno-idyllists argue that since the function of management has eclipsed that of possessing capital and since the latter has become diffused (that is, fragmented due to the spread of share capital), the problem of property has lost its former relevance and exercises a gradually diminishing influence on the development processes in society.

As far back as the fifties, bourgeois sociologists arrived at the conclusion that disposal of capital and the related function of economic domination had passed into the hands of technocrats. Fourastié said: in all countries people are coming to see more and more clearly that preponderant factors of civilisation are not, as we believed for a long time, juridical or political factor, property, production relations, military or political domination, but the technology of production.\*

Raymond Aron put the idea still more bluntly. Capitalism, he said, was resorting to 'non-authoritarian planning' while the illusion of 'totalitarian planning' (evidently meaning the experience of the USSR and other socialist countries—*G. Sh.*) had faded with the illusion that society can dispense with money, prices, autonomous enterprise, interest, and the like. Only the status of property, he amplified, continued 'as a real theme of ideological debate and historical dialogue'\*\*.

This is probably the fullest and the most laconic formulation of the challenge futurologists have flung at history, at reality, at common sense, about the central issue of all social arrangements. Let us, therefore, examine it a little more closely.

It contains at least three faults. To begin with, Aron's identifying socialist planning with abolition of money, prices, and other economic regulators and stimulants is nothing but a distortion of the truth. Marxists never put up reckless slogans. Long before the socialist revolution, they knew that in the socialist stage there would have to be a blend of planning and market regulation, which Lenin described as instruments of control and accounting. They knew that in the absence of these instruments effective production and rational distribution were inconceivable, and that they could not be renounced until full communism was built and there was an

\* See Fourastié, *Laleuf, Révolution à l'Ouest*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1957, p. 9.

\*\* Aron, *Progress and Disillusion. The Dialectics of Modern Society*, Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, New York, 1968, p. 193.

abundance of goods, and people would have a communist mentality.

Hence, if there are still any deficiencies in the economic development of socialist countries, they are not due to mythical illusions about 'totalitarian planning' but to inaccuracies in balancing the planning principle, the regulating role of the market, and the economic stimuli of production.

Senseless, too, is Aron's attempt to explain the 'abrogation' of the problem of property with references to 'non-authoritarian planning' in capitalist countries. State interference in the economy is as old as the hills. It was practised on a fairly large scale even by ancient Eastern despots. The irrigation schemes in old Egypt could hardly have arisen in the absence of considered state-governed programmes. But did this interfere with the existence and development of property relations?

Just as obviously the programming, that has become part of capitalism in its state-monopoly stage, in no way jeopardises private property. On the contrary, private property sets rigid limits to rational planning in the interest of society as a whole. Seen from this angle, the system is deficient precisely because the state cannot tell the big concerns what they must do for the country's economic good—creating new jobs, and the like.

Lastly, the passage taken from Aron bares the fatal weakness of all techno-idyllic theorists.

It may appear at first glance that their approach to social development is purely materialistic. For don't they emphasise the scientific-technical revolution which is the crucial factor spurring growth of the productive forces, and don't they see material production as the mainspring of all social change? So far so good. Save for a trifle—the question of property relations. There Aron ignores a problem that has been the curse of the human race for millennia. The futurists are all of like mind. The only difference is how they go about 'liquidating' the property problem. Some contrive to spirit it away in cavalier style, evidently hoping that no one will notice. Others refer to its 'disappearance' with a measure of uncertainty. Brashly but indistinctly, they trace the pretended miracle to the diffusion of big property, to the notorious 'participation' of workers in the running of production, and the like.

One supporter of 'diffusion' defined its purpose thus: 'With the idea of people's shares spreading more and more, it is becoming possible to overcome the remnants of collectivist, socialist, and class-oriented thinking among the population. It is therefore

possible to overcome Marxism completely.\* This Napoleonic scheme, projected more than twenty years ago, was not destined to come true: property did not become diffused, nor was Marxism overcome.

And this is as it should be, because the 'diffusion' theory is rank self-deceit by its authors and propagators, and rank political deceit of the workers in capitalist countries, where attempts are being made to seduce them with the prospect of becoming co-owners of enterprises. Stocks and shares have always been a means of concentrating capital. How can they now serve the opposite goal?

But suppose the metamorphosis did occur. It is, indeed, possible in theory and practice that part of the working class grows rich, joining the ranks of proprietors. But that will not solve the problem of property because the big shareholders will not relinquish control or let their capital be 'diffused'.

As for the omnipotence of technocrats, we'll get back to that later. Now, I want to disagree once more with Raymond Aron, who declares: 'To say that the "monopolists", or "Wall Street", rule the United States ... is to give credence to a caricature still firmly entrenched in radical circles' (*op. cit.*, p. 186).

Not the monopolists? Not Wall Street? Who, in that case, may I ask, does rule the United States? If big property has become public or has undergone diffusion, or has become a fiction, and if the managers have climbed to power—if this is so, why do the Rockefellers, Fords, Duponts, Mellons, Tafts and their like continue to make U. S. policy, and this not only indirectly through a legion of faithful congressmen and lobbyists, but also directly as governors, vice-presidents, and the like. Are we to regard them as highly-specialised experts and not as controlling shareholders of some of the world's biggest companies and as owners of some of the world's biggest fortunes? No, gentlemen, technocrats come and go, but the big capitalists remain.

In effect, failure to pose and resolve the problem of property gives all present-day techno-idyllic concepts a capitalist class orientation and in that sense they are less authentic than, say, the theories of Thomas More and Tommaso Campanella who saw—back in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—that if private property was not abolished there could be no truly sensible and just social order. And the failure to tackle the property problem or, more precisely, the wish to preserve capitalist relations at any price, leaves all the other techno-idyllic provisions hanging in the air—at best as abstract slogans or well-meaning rhetoric.

\* H. Rheinfels, *Biebel für Volksaktionäre*, Siegburg, 1957, pp. 18-19.

*Tenet 4.* By virtue of the changes wrought in the structure of society by the scientific-technical revolution, the predominant place in it, so say the authors of techno-idyllic theories, has gone to those who work by brain—the white-collar workers.

Here, too, they take the cue from a trend that has, indeed, made itself felt everywhere. The growing role of mental labour is a natural effect of advancing civilisation, though the rate and quality of the process may substantially differ depending on socio-economic conditions and practical policies.

Not the facts are objectionable here, but the conclusions drawn from them. Take the social structure of Bell's 'post-industrial society'. It renounces the traditional division into classes, and even the stratification conventionally recognised by bourgeois sociologists. Bell conceives the social structure on three planes—the horizontal (stratification based on knowledge), the vertical (professional activity), plus the system of control (political). The links between social strata, on the one hand, and the economic and political systems, on the other, are thereby obliterated. And there is no hint at all how power and influence are distributed between the different social groups, what milieu the managers come from, and who are the ones cast in the role of the governed.

But let us at least see how Bell stratifies the social groups along the axis of knowledge. He suggests the following division: the class of highly-qualified specialists, including the following groups—scientists, professionals (engineers, economists, physicians), administrators, cultural workers, medium-level technical personnel, office and commercial employees, craftsmen and semi-skilled workers (blue collars). That is all.

Isn't there room in 'post-industrial society' for capitalists? If not, it comes close to socialist society in class structure. But that isn't so: in the third sub-division of Bell's social scheme, where it says about the system of control (political system), 'distributors' are singled out under a separate head, meaning the apparatus of the president, the leaders of the legislative bodies, the top bureaucracy, and the military brass. In addition, under the head of 'politics', there are the parties and elites, and, furthermore, so-called mobilisation groups, which also include business.

But if business survives, why aren't businessmen mentioned in the first part among the social groups? The only ones who can identify with them are the administrators. But precisely here lies the class cunning of Bell's social model, for in his scheme capitalist enterprise is either wholly left out of the reckoning or is viewed as a part of the 'hierarchy of knowledge'. In other words, capitalists are



not referred to a class of people who govern by virtue of their property, but to people who govern owing to their aptitude, knowledge, technical experience, and so on, that is, on wholly justifiable and merited grounds.

It is proper to recall the reservation Bell makes to escape the charges of his futurist brethren that he has reduced his scheme of society to the scientific and technical plane. He admits of criteria on other planes. But his social structure is 'built' entirely on the scientific and technical level, and ignores the class aspect.

Yet, despite efforts to give the 'post-industrial society' the complexion of a classless society, Bell leaves a place in it for capital. And what a place! According to his economic estimates, more than 55 per cent of the national product will be produced by large corporations. There you have what might be described as the block of shares that makes for control over social production and, at once, over politics.

'The justification of the corporation,' Bell writes, 'no longer lay primarily in the natural right of private property, but in its role as an instrument for providing more and more goods to the people.'\* Bell wants us to see the corporation as a social institution, for, he claims, in recent decades it has been moving steadily from the principle of economising towards the sociologising end of the scale (in which all workers are guaranteed lifetime jobs, and the satisfaction of the work force becomes the primary levy on resources). As Bell sees it, the corporation will in due course take the place of such traditional sources of social support as the small town, church and family, which are gradually crumbling or have crumbled (*op. cit.*, p. 289). 'To think of the business corporation, then, simply as an economic instrument,' he says, 'is to fail totally to understand the meaning of the social changes of the last half century' (*op. cit.*, p. 289).

Let's leave aside the question of how near and dear to wage-earners a corporation can be, or how it is able to set itself sociologising rather than economising goals (that is, give precedence to the interest of society rather than profit). All this pro-corporation pathos does not explain why private property must, after all, survive. Doubly so, since futurologists themselves hold that it is no longer based on natural right, and that the very concept of property has lost meaning and has become fiction.

The fact that the social scheme of the 'post-industrial society'

\* Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting*, Basic Books Publishers, New York, 1973, p. 272.

has a place for business but none for businessmen is not, however, its main weakness. What is worse is that it gives no answer to the chief question in any social analysis, namely, the principles governing relations between the social strata determined by the status of the strata in the system of social production, by their relation to the means of production, by the size of their share of the social product and the method of receiving it, that is, by all the accepted factors forming social classes.

Due to the absence of such analysis in Bell's scheme, its character unavoidably becomes hierarchical. In his scheme the relations between the social groups are determined exclusively by quantity and quality of knowledge. But in that case it is little more than a modern edition of feudalism, where each estate was given a definite status, determining its share of the social product and its participation in government.

U. S. sociologists Wright and Perrone maintain in their sociological study that the decisive factor behind the social distinctions in modern capitalist society is not 'knowledge stratification' but the relation to property and other categories in the Marxist analysis of classes (see Erik Olin Wright and Luca Perrone, 'Marxist Class Categories and Income Inequality', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 32, 52).

*Tenet 5.* Owing to changes in the structure of society, the content of state power changes radically, with professionals, notably the scientific elite (meritocracy), growing into the leading political force.

The origins of this techno-idyllic tenet may be traced to the 'managerial revolution' concept which James Burnham was among the first to formulate in the early forties.\* Its substance is that in modern capitalist society, which is no longer oriented exclusively on the market and employs rational methods of economic management based on the latest achievements of science and technology, capital is in effect handled by managers, the top-class specialists or, in the broad sense, the technocrats.

As at the time of the passage from feudalism to capitalism, Burnham maintains, when the feudal lords were replaced not by the peasants they had oppressed but by an entirely new class, the capitalist class will not be replaced by the proletariat but will surrender its place to the managers. This concept with various correctives and modifications was espoused by practically all Western ideologues. According to Galbraith, for example, 'the

\* Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution. What Is Happening in the World*, John Day Co., New York, 1941.

modern state ... is not the executive committee of the bourgeoisie, but it is more nearly the executive committee of the technocrate'.<sup>8</sup> He went so far as to say that the technocracy had spread to all countries regardless of social system.

Prof. Robert D. Putnam even said that 'the theory of technocracy seems to have special applicability to Communist elites', because as the 'new regime becomes institutionalised, ... power inexorably shifts from the ideologues and party organisers towards the managers and technicians'. Thereupon, he contradicts himself by saying that 'this trend has not come at the expense of experience and training within the party organisation' (see Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1976, p. 209).

The idea of technocratic rule has come under the fire of Marxist writers. The greater political influence exercised by people employed in management has not reached, nor could it, a level that would justify references to a new ruling stratum or, still less, to power shifting from owners of capital to managers (for more detail see Georgi Shakhnazarov, *The Destiny of the World. The Socialist Shape of Things to Come*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979).

The technocratic concept has also come under fire in Western political writing, especially from the New Left. This prompted the futurists to introduce certain modifications. Bell, for example, gave to understand that not a technocracy but a meritocracy would come to power in his 'post-industrial society'. If this contention is taken at its face value, government is to pass into the hands of the most worthy, knowledgeable and wise people. Putting things in more specific terms, Bell wrote: 'The scientific estate—its ethos and organisation—is the monad that contains within itself the image of the future society' (*op. cit.*, p. 378).

But this modification did not satisfy the critics either. Italian professor Giovanni Sartori observed that 'the "theory class" prediction shares the recurrent Platonic illusion, and delusion, of the philosopher-king. For one thing, even if a man of science governs, he need not govern as a scientist.' Political power, in his view, rests with the people who specialise in power-seeking and power-wielding. And to the extent that intellectuals are intellectuals, and scientists remain scientists, they do not qualify as a 'sovereign' (i. e. political) power class. A theory class has power in its own domain, which is intellectual institutions, not political institutions (see Sartori, 'Technological Forecasting and Politics', in *Survey*, Winter 1971, p. 66). In the 'post-industrial society',

<sup>8</sup> Galbraith, *Economics and the Public Purpose*, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973, p. 172.

Sartori concludes, government will always be a government of politicians, but a government aided and reinforced by expert advice.

Similar ideas are set forth by Norman Birnbaum. He does not believe that in modern capitalist society power has shifted from men of property to scientists. As he sees it, knowledge elites are invariably subordinated to political elites, with reason being a commodity produced for sale by the enlightened technocracy to earn a livelihood.

'Does the intellectual division of labour preclude the development of a social reason of the sort ... apprehended by Marx?' Birnbaum asks, and adds: 'If so, the use of reason by enlightened technocracy appears to be the most we may hope for—if for no other reason than promising the most reasonable organization of a fundamentally irrational society.'\*

In short, the U. S. sociologist does not believe in the advent to power of any knowledge elite, on the one hand, and sees it as something next to a saviour of the fundamentally irrational capitalist society, on the other.

But why hasn't the meritocracy idea a leg to stand on? Hadn't Saint-Simon planned in his realm of reason to assign government to a 'great mathematician' and to his colleagues as plenipotentiary local prefects? The distinguished Utopian had revered mathematics and saw it, not without reason, as the model of human wisdom. Campanella suggested a similar solution in his *City of the Sun*, and so did many other authors of utopian social schemes.

The flaw of the meritocracy idea is less in its content than in the social conditions to which it is being applied. In the conditions of full communist society, where no room will remain for social privileges and for social classes, control will naturally be entrusted to the wisest, the most knowledgeable and the worthiest.

It is different with a government of scientists in a society divided into classes, and antagonistic classes at that. By the logic of things such government will not be technological government (which is in principle the function of science), but a form of political power. By this token the whole concept is not only utopian, but also reactionary.

Let us assume that at the turn of the century somewhere on our globe a technocracy does climb into the saddle.

\* Birnbaum, 'The Problem of a Knowledge Elite', in *Social Development. Critical Perspectives*, Basic Books Publishers, New York, London, 1972, pp. 91-2, 92.

There is one substantial reservation. Certain Western authors associate technocracy directly with the crisis of capitalism's political system, with the fact that 'government of the people and for the people has not yet made its entry in reality' in the capitalist world (see Alfred Frisch, 'Les prévisions à l'épreuve de la réalité', *Analyse et Prévision*, Vol. XVI, No. 3, September 1973, p. 267). The reference here, evidently, is less to technocracy as a form of political rule, and rather to the officialdom or, more precisely, to the use of technocrats in the governmental apparatus by the ruling class.

Let us suppose that when such a technocracy climbs into the saddle, some 75 per cent of all gainfully employed in the economically developed countries will, as Western sociologists estimate, belong to the 'white collar' section of society, that is, will be scientists, technicians, engineers, and other specialists organising production, exchange, and distribution. The overwhelming technocratic majority will then govern the minority of 'blue collars' (some 15 to 20 per cent) and businessmen (about 3 to 5 per cent), properly concealed but in no way lost in the scheme of social 'technocratic idylls'. But who, in that case, will govern the technocrats?

Now, let us take a more refined variant of technocracy—known as meritocracy. Here, again, the ends do not meet. Inasmuch as the scientific elite becomes a political elite, and political power becomes its constant function, it must protect its privileges and prerogatives, and to do so with ever greater perseverance as the initial reason for its ascent—superior knowledge—diminishes.

But even before the worthy men of science turn into ordinary dictators, they have a chance to use their omnipotence. How? The answer is obvious: depending on their political sympathies and their faith in the *rationale* of the social order they select. If supporters of socialism, they will set out to abolish the class of capitalists through a 'revolution from above', because capitalists are useless in a scientifically organised and governed society. Need I prove that those in power will see to it that this does not happen. Consequently, the model of meritocracy needs to be corrected: power in 'post-industrial society' will go not to those 'worthy' of it, but only to those who prove they can be trusted.

Some authors of 'techno-idylls' are sceptical of their merits. Jean Fourastié, for example, who predicts that 'tertiary civilisation' (industrial) must eventually give place to 'quaternary' (a civilisation of knowledge), is anything but overjoyed at the prospect. In substance, he envisages the division of all society into two groups, with the bigger consisting of the mass of consumers, bourgeois in mentality, clamouring continuously for their share of the pudding, and a smaller, creative, scientific elite adept at organising the

affairs of society, and supplying its needs. Clearly, one more version of the order described by H. G. Wells in *The Time Machine*.

I might add that contrary to the widespread opinion of 'the ultimate power of the consumer', Western political scientists and economists often admit the reverse. Galbraith, for example, denies the so-called neo-classical model of the 'ultimate power of the consumer'. He argues that needs and tastes are ascertained by the producer, and imposed on the consumer through a system combining production of novelty goods and advertising.\*

In short, the future consumer majority serviced and ruled by the scientific and technical elite would be less an object of the latter's care and much more an object of manipulation. The life-style and mentality of people would depend on this elite, on its ethos. And, surely, the elite would be least of all interested in elevating the mass consumer to its own level. The very reverse. The 'post-industrial society' concept provides for a definite level of social inequality. That, in fact it sees as a source of economic efficiency and as a lever for resolving acute social problems by technological means.

Raymond Aron presents the elite philosophy more bluntly. He maintains that since society grows more complex more quickly than the masses grow more educated, an abyss between the minority, capable of what he calls rational discussion of social problems, and all the others is inevitable. So, reconcile yourself to everlasting inequality. 'Some groups,' he says, 'will continue to feel shut off from higher culture by the very nature of the work they do... On this hypothesis, it has seemed probable that the demand of equality would be individual rather than collective. The various strata would not confront each other as ultimate enemies.'\*\*

One must have the utmost contempt for human nature to assume that the mass of the people will suffer a growing rift between them and a select stratum in culture, in the ability to produce, let alone consume, values of the spirit, to say nothing of running society's affairs. It is a peculiar form of arrogance, the arrogance of knowledge, which opposes itself to other types of social activity and wants to demean them.

Aron assumes that satiated and content slaves, for whom the heights of culture are out of reach, will accept their lot without demurral, and not without gratification. But Bell, a more serious analyst, steers clear of this simplicism. On the contrary, while he

\* See Galbraith, *Economics and Public Purpose*, p. 137.

\*\* Aron, *Progress and Disillusion*, p. 44.



programs inequality and, like Aron, considers it inevitable, even essential for the prosperity of society, he also plans what may be described as a 'revolution'. But let's leave that for later.

Concluding our examination of meritocracy, let us note that the idea of rule by scientists causes some Western sociologists to object. They hold that such rule would give the edge to natural scientists, who are not always able correctly to evaluate social problems and make the right decisions.

But, to be sure, the thing does not just amount to rule of scientists, and not to just which scientists—natural or social—but to what role science can play in society, including politics and government. The answer to that may be found in the practice of socialism. It shows that science as a function of organised reason, and scientists as its bearers, can fulfil their social mission only where society develops along planned lines and on the ideas of scientific communism.

Now, taking the building material offered by the 'technical idylls', let us try and construct an edifice. That would be not merely difficult, but probably impossible if we did not have a ready architectural blueprint. By which I mean Daniel Bell's concept, for he has taken the trouble to give his futurological speculations integral form. His works have aroused widespread interest and were discussed at several specially convened symposia. In fact, Bell's 'post-industrial society' is a kind of standard measure of 'techno-idyllic' society.

The concept 'post-industrial society' was first used in the title of a book by Arthur J. Penty, an advocate of so-called guild socialism (*Post-Industrialism*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1922).

At the risk of repeating myself, I wish to set out the two basic documents in which Prof. Bell joined into one what he regards as the essential elements of his 'post-industrial society' (see Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*). To begin with, the five chief elements (he calls them indicators):

1. The economic sphere—a shift from producing goods to producing services.
2. The sphere of employment—predominance of mental labourers.
3. The pivotal principle—dominance of theoretical knowledge as a source of innovation and policy-making.
4. Orientation on the future—control over technology and evaluation of the consequences of technical innovations.
5. Decision-making based on a new 'intellectual technology' and

use of its methods in the theory of government, in economic and futurological models, and so on.

The other document is presented as a table:

Stratification and Power			
	Pre-Industrial society	Industrial society	Post-industrial society
Resources . . . .	land	machines	knowledge
Chief social institution . . . .	farm, plantation	private firms	university, research institute
Dominant figure . . . .	landowner, soldier	businessman	scientist, researcher
Means of power . . . .	direct control by force	indirect influence on politics	equilibrium of technico-political forces, election rights
Class basis . . . .	property, armed force	property, political organisation, technical skill	technical skill
Manner of appropriation . . . .	inheritance, military seizure	inheritance, patronage, education	political organisation, technical education, mobilisation, co-operation

Those are the basic postulates of 'post-industrial society'. Now that we have this scheme before us, we can see that they reflect tendencies seen in present-day scientific and technical development. But we can also see how shaky they are as a basis for predicting the future.

This applies especially to the elements of the second document, where schematism is taken to the absurd and where practically no indicator will stand up to criticism. How can anyone squeeze everything that preceded the first technical revolution, the period of manufacturing or machine production, into one 'pre-industrial society'? And how are we to explain the disappearance of property in 'post-industrial society' while inheritance survives? The simplicisms, even absurdities, that occur in the scheme only show the weakness of positivist attempts to reduce the dialectical wealth of social problems to abstract formulas. They also show the absence of any *rationale*, of any new key to the problems of the future, and inability to refute Marxism or offer any in the least acceptable alternative to scientifically based forecasting.

Indeed, is it worth paying for technical progress the price of social regression, the price of preserving, possibly even increasing,

inequality? For that is fraught with an inevitable explosion. All the more so if this agonising choice can be avoided, because socialism offers all the requisite conditions for the scientific-technical revolution to take its course. Besides, and this is important, in socialist conditions it is given a consistently humane purpose, while its possible negative consequences are reduced to the minimum. It is a different matter that in some spheres of science and technology the socialist countries are still behind the capitalist. That is a matter not of the system but of the level of development, i. e., in the final analysis, a matter of time.

The 'techno-idyllic' concepts cannot be a serious alternative to Marxism-Leninism. They do not as a rule even include, at least as an integral component, any examination of the processes obtaining in the world as a whole. The future they predict could apply for only the Western part of the world and, in effect, excludes three-quarters of humanity. Their authors take an artificial situation as the starting-point. They set the developed capitalist countries apart from the rest of the world, tearing them out of the context of world politics and world progress. This adds utopianism to already utopian projects, for it is impossible to conceive how problems of the future can be solved for an isolated group of countries without taking account of the socialist world system, of the gap between the industrialised and the economically underdeveloped countries, and, of course, of the problem of maintaining world peace.

A large number of works in the West are devoted to global problems. But these problems are considered in isolation from the futurological concepts. The two fields are usually treated independently, in parallel, along lines that do not cross. In this sense the architects of 'techno-idyllic' projects have not gone very far from those 'utopians' who so carefully isolated their model communities and even transplanted them on the Moon.

This artificial isolation is seen even in those futurological treatises that combine the story of the future 'techno-paradise' with an analysis of global problems. Zbigniew Brzezinski, for example, says that in due course the rivalry between East and West may give way to contradictions between North and South, that no upswing of the revolutionary movement is to be expected in the Third World, and so on. He does not bother about proving his points. Neither does he align them with the problems of the 'technetronic' ('post-industrial') society in the United States of America. He is not in the least troubled by the extent to which various changes in international affairs might inhibit or, conversely, stimulate the

advance of American society to the place chosen for it by the futurologists.

There is only one subject related to international affairs that the authors of 'techno-idyllic' concepts tend to look into more or less closely—the role of America in the modern world. Brzezinski says: 'Rome exported law; England, parliamentary party democracy; France, culture and republican nationalism; the contemporary United States, technological-scientific innovation and mass culture derived from high consumption' (*Between Two Ages*, The Working Press Publishers, New York, 1970, p. 25). He predicts that at the end of the century America will still be 'a significant force for global change, whether or not the dominant subjective mood is pro- or anti-American' (*op. cit.*, p. 35).

According to most U. S. economists and sociologists the gap between the United States and all other countries will continue to widen in all areas of industrial power and technical progress. Blinded by their chauvinism, U. S. futurologists consign other nations to the fate of submissively tailing behind the 'leader' and picking up the rests from the feast of the almighty American intellect.

Brzezinski portrays the United States as the 'world's social laboratory'. He writes: 'It is in the United States that the crucial dilemmas of our age manifest themselves most starkly; it is in the United States that man's capacity to master his environment and to define himself meaningfully in relationship to it is being most intensely tested. Can man master science for fundamentally human ends? Can liberty and equality coexist, and do so in a multiracial environment? Can merit and achievement flourish without special privilege? Can technology be socially creative without inducing excessive social control? Can a society with diverse beliefs avoid complete disbelief?' (*op. cit.*, p. 196).

One need only take an impartial look at the surrounding world, and ready answers to all these questions will be found. The experience of the Soviet Union and Cuba have proved that 'liberty and equality coexist, and do so in a multiracial environment'. The experience of socialism has proved that merit and achievement do flourish without special privilege, and that science can and must serve fundamentally human ends, and be socially creative.

But back to the overall evaluation of 'techno-idyllic concepts'. It is more than obvious that they cannot substitute for the idea of socialism and communism. In any case, their attempt to do so has ended in fiasco both in practical and in theoretical terms. In practical terms, the 'techno-idyllic concepts' have made absolutely

no impression on the public, save perhaps the narrow stratum of upper-level professionals. This means that they are not being activated, that they have not become the platform of any real forces of social renewal. In theoretical terms, the numerous contradictions and incongruities have stripped them of the intrinsic harmony lacking which no authentic logical inception is conceivable. Furthermore, many of their provisions are impossible and utopian in character. This is why even people inclining towards 'techno-idyllic' thinking cannot fully believe in them or take inspiration from them.

U. S. sociologist Bert Cochran writes: 'Bell has composed a book to demonstrate that a new society will be ushered in with no more "ideology" and social passion than it takes to introduce a new automobile model. His post-industrial society has the allure of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.... Technocracy spoke for the brotherhood of men, and Saint-Simonism became, in fact, the initiator of French socialism. Bell's technocracy in contrast, is a jejune affair' (*The Nation*, 30 July 1973, pp. 86-87).

The futurologists themselves, among whom there are many brilliant minds, were evidently conscious of the vulnerability of their views of the future. Still, doubt did not prevent them from reaping the fruits of success at the time when every forecast tended to become a best-seller, and the favourable economic situation held the promise that capitalism would flourish for years and years. Along with the political leaders and captains of big business they, the advisers and experts of the Establishment, believed or wanted to believe that a miracle had happened and God had not allowed capitalism to wither by sending it the magic techno-scientific life-belt at its most critical hour.

But years passed and the hopes that the scientific-technical revolution would automatically heal the social sores of capitalism faded. The 'techno-idyllic' concepts lost their glitter. After the May 1968 mass upheaval in Paris, and especially in the early seventies when the capitalist world was hit by monetary and energy crises, the serious futurologists became aware that they must straighten out their notions of the future if these were not to lose credibility. One of the first to respond was Daniel Bell, and since his correctives were by and large received favourably by his colleagues, we are at liberty to refer them to the whole futurological clan.

To be sure, in order to really follow the commandments of positivism solemnly proclaimed in Western universities, rejecting 'postulates' and requiring verification of scientific judgements, it would have been wiser to revise the initial principles of prognosis

and forecasting on which the 'techno-idyllic' concepts repose. Alas, this was not done. Bell turned his back on reality and claimed uniqueness and universality for his model of the future.

The idea of 'replacing' socialism in socialist countries and 'abolishing' it as a perspective for capitalist countries, which had until then been the foundation of all 'techno-idyllic' concepts, was replaced by the idea of 'post-industrial society' as an integral part of the future fitting the framework of different social systems. According to Bell, 'one can have capitalist and collectivist post-industrial societies, as one has the United States and the Soviet Union as industrial societies' (*The New York Review of Books*, January 24, 1974, p. 50).

In substance, Bell disavowed the one element that made the 'techno-idylls' a 'counterweight' to Marxism-Leninism and the ideological credo of the capitalist world.

Indeed, he went even farther, leaving room in his 'post-industrial society' for revolutionary struggle, including struggle stemming from class antagonisms. Since 'meritocracy' provides for differences in status and income, it is of course logical to assume that there will be what Bell describes as aggressive reactions to inequality or post-industrial rebellions (attacks on examinations, diplomas and academic degrees, the struggle of Blacks and other coloured people, and of women for equal educational opportunities, and so on).

This as I see it, is an abdication of 'post-industrial society' as the idealised model of the future. From now on it may be regarded either as a variant of the techno-nightmare predicted by Jacques Ellul, Erich Fromm and many other Western sociologists, or as another forecast of the foreseeable future, resembling those of Hermann Kahn, Anthony J. Wiener, and others, without any claim to being an ideal social model and confining its goal to a simple projection of surfacing tendencies.

In his book, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (Basic Books Publishers, New York, 1976), Bell offers a prescription of how to put the capitalist house in order, eliminate economic chaos, put economy under political control, and align the whole system with firmly established standards of 'political philosophy'.

Bell's efforts only show that when even highly-intelligent people set out to create techno-idylls, they are bound to fail because a marble palace cannot be built out of sandstone. People will not be tempted by a future in which private property, and consequently exploitation of labour by capital, will continue,



and much less by the prospect of coming under a new elite, that of scientists using their knowledge as capital.

That is at the root of the negative political response to the 'techno-idyllic' concepts. They mislead scientists and technical specialists—a social stratum that possesses considerable influence and could play an important part in blazing the road to social progress, but this only on the condition that it will act jointly with the working class. What futurologists project, however, is an alliance of intellectuals and capitalists against the people.

Bell's book is hardly the culmination of futurological activity. It is quite possible that we will soon see new projects reposing on a technical foundation. They will probably have more profound social content, and will contain 'socio-idyllic' concepts. The futurological clan is clearly dissatisfied with the results of its forecasting. More, it is beginning to see the one-sidedness and incompleteness of its attempts at anticipating the future solely through the prospect of scientific and technical progress. Some of its members have lost faith in the idea that the scientific-technical revolution and the material and spiritual resources of the capitalist class can save the last of the oppressive social systems or at least prolong its life. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that they are hurriedly repairing their constructions and adding a social touch to them.

U. S. Professor Henry Winthrop was grieved, and this in the early seventies, that most forecasts of scientific and technical development lacked two important elements:

- 1) an examination of methods for defining the social consequences of scientific and technical development and,
- 2) dependable methods for defining the correlation of all these consequences, whose absence led to contradictions in the forecasting of the overall complex of scientific and technical discoveries and achievements, to non-systematic and disjointed forecasting.

As Winthrop sees it, prognosis should blend with social philosophy, which deals in humanitarian problems. So far, he laments, no serious attempt has been made to blend the two and define the direction of development most desirable for humanity.\*

To sum up, the bourgeois techno-idyllic concepts are, on the

whole, nothing but a false alternative to scientific communism. If the present is pictured as being separated from the future by a wall that a powerful beam can penetrate, then the joint energy generated by Marxist thought and the activity of the working class has already created a big breach in it. And attempts at creating other breaches, and obtaining other pictures more to one's taste, are a fiasco.

\* See Winthrop, 'Utopia Construction and Future Forecasting: Problems, Limitations and Relevance', in *The Sociology of the Future*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1971, pp. 95-96.

To produce a more or less authentic picture of the immediate, let alone the more distant, social developments, it is important to answer the following question: what is the measure of truth in the theory of convergence, the theory of the fusion of the two systems through their progressive rapprochement. For if this theory has any grounds, the future society will not be socialist or, at best, it will be only partly socialist.

To begin with, a few words about the authors of the theory of convergence. Of late, even H. G. Wells is being referred to as one of them for the simple reason that in his book, *Russia in the Shadows*, the great writer of romances had said Russia's industrialisation would cause the social structure of Soviet society to edge closer to the social structure of the developed capitalist states.

References are also made to Otto Bauer, who in 1920 predicted that in the long term Russian socialism would acquire democratic features and Western capitalism socialist features (see *Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte*, Cologne, No. 12, 1970).

There is no denying that the idea of convergence has a string of forerunners. Still, in its present shape, it belongs chiefly to J. K. Galbraith, Pitirim Sorokin, Walt Rostow, Ian Tinbergen, and a few other Western sociologists and political scientists. These names alone show that the theory of convergence must interweave with various 'techno-idyllic' concepts. And that is so, though with one reservation.

The 'techno-idyllic' concepts project a dressed-up version of capitalist society. The uppermost purpose of their creators was not simply to find building material that could make capitalism more enduring. They had set out to find a variant of the future that would by every possible, desirably convincing, means refute socialism. From this standpoint, the concepts of 'industrial', 'post-industrial', 'technetronic' and similar societies may to some degree

be considered 'convergent', because they predict that in the more or less distant future socialism will be swallowed by a new system.

It follows from what these concepts construe that capitalist economy will be the foundation of this projected system. For, to begin with, all the basic characteristics of 'post-industrial society' repose on the chief characteristics of capitalism, notably private property in means of production. No less revealing in that respect is the claim that the United States has already entered the post-industrial stage, while the Soviet Union is only approaching its threshold. In short, all countries of the world (some soon, others in a hundred years) will 'reach' this summit and become merged in a flourishing humanity.

Though convergent in their substance, the 'techno-idyllic' concepts are only a ramification, certainly not the mainstream, of the theory of convergence. Their denial of socialism is, so to say, incidental. They merely say that the need for socialism will drop away under the impact of the all-powerful alliance of the scientific-technical revolution and capitalist 'efficiency'.

The theory of convergence in its so to say pure form, however, is a projection of the idea that the two systems will fuse. Where they will fuse and at what point is something else. The 'fusion' may occur along the lines of Napoleon's rendezvous with Alexander I halfway between the banks of the Niemen at Tilsit. Or it may be a 'fusion' along the lines of the penance that German Emperor Henry IV paid to Pope Gregory VII. (Henry, it may be recalled, went in penance to Canossa, where the Pope granted him absolution, and thereby also the crown of the Holy Roman Empire.) Let us use these two basic variants in our subsequent discussion under the symbolic names 'Tilsit' and 'Canossa'.

There are supporters of both variants among the authors of the convergence theory. Most of them, it is true, try to conceal their true purpose in order to make the idea more attractive for representatives of both social systems.

Some of the authors of the convergence theory were sincerely puzzled by the Marxists' negative response to it. They had thought Communists would see the 'fusion' of the two systems as a kind of honour, for didn't leading Western politologists thereby officially acknowledge that socialism had the positive content that was previously firmly denied.

True, if some thirty years ago a bourgeois ideologist had even hinted at a resemblance between the capitalist and socialist economic systems, he would have been instantly excommunicated. His scholarly career would come to an end. Even more recently it

took considerable political courage to observe any positive features in the socialist system, let alone recommend their use on a capitalist foundation.

Among the devotees of the convergence theory there are those who accept the idea of the peaceful coexistence of the two systems in a manner close to that of the Marxists. And there are those who take an extreme anti-communist stance. But regardless of their political creed, regardless of whether they look forward to, or fear, the convergence and fusion of the two systems, the idea itself is evidence of a major turn-about in bourgeois thinking from complete denial to a semi-recognition of the socialist realities.

But bourgeois sociology did not, nor could, go farther than that. It stopped at a threshold it could not cross, for crossing meant abdication of everything it stood for. Its class outlook, class order, and class prejudice prevented it from crossing that threshold. Which shows that the Marxists were right to level their strictly scientific criticism at the theory of convergence. Here, I will touch on just a few of the more essential points related to our topic.

First, is a symbiosis of the two systems (or the political forces representing them) at all possible by 'amical accord'?

In the case of international relations between socialist and capitalist states in the transitional revolutionary era, sensible accord is quite possible—in the name of jointly resolving acute global problems and, first of all, in the name of peace. But problems of social development cannot be resolved by accord. Mainly because it is beyond the power of man, for all his extensive resources, to alter and much less repeal the action of objective laws that govern the movement of history.

To be sure, in certain conditions and for a certain time it may be possible to devise a society combining socialist and capitalist features. I'll say more: this is natural during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. Such constructions are brought into being by the realities of the transition (e. g., the simultaneous existence of the socialist and capitalist modes of production in the early post-revolution period). But social progress cannot stop halfway. Sooner or later, the growth of the productive forces and the relations of production will make society move on to what may be described as full socialism.

Hence, clearly, no subjective notion or act can produce a lasting symbiosis or hybrid of the two opposite social systems, one of which has come into the world at the bidding of history to replace the other.

Robert L. Heilbroner, a supporter of the convergence theory,

holds that it is vitally important for humanity to secure in the 'middle range future' (somewhere around 2000—2025 by his estimate) a welding of 'the best of socialist economic practice with the best of liberal capitalist political practice'.\*

Before coming to the 'choice' of components, I want to emphasise that any scheme of 'grafting' socialism on capitalism or vice versa is bound to fail. And I repeat, any scheme, regardless of what is to be grafted—the socialist system of economic planning on bourgeois parliamentarism or private enterprise and competition on the socialist state of the whole people. Socialism cannot be grafted on capitalism and vice versa, any more than the future can be grafted on the past, or fire on ice, or north on south. Those are all polar phenomena. They may be able to interact but are in principle incompatible.

Let's see if Heilbroner's formula can be made more convincing by removing from it the subjective element. Suppose the unsatisfactory forms of social life drop away in the course of society's development, while the more valuable ones that have proved effective in practice take root and proliferate? Suppose, too, that as a result of this objective process, which may be likened to the survival of the fittest, there really emerges a socialist-capitalist hybrid?

The weakness of the convinced supporters of the convergence theory and the deceit of those who advocate it for exclusively propaganda purposes are rooted in the fact that they tie these two half-questions and half-arguments into one. They infer that by allowing for the chance of 'assimilation' we must also automatically allow for the probability of convergence. But there is no such inner connection: the answer to the first question is certainly and surely affirmative, while the answer to the second is just as certainly and surely negative.

The authors of the convergence theory may disagree. Won't the accumulation of similar elements, they may ask, lead sooner or later to a kind of in-between society? No, things are not as simple as they may appear on the surface. It depends on what specific elements become common and universal, on the extent to which they become common and universal, and on what modifications they happen to undergo.

The resemblances may derive from different causes. The first and most substantial cause is historical. It concerns phenomena

\* Heilbroner, *Business Civilisation in Decline*, W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1976, p. 59.



and forms of life rooted in the general conditions in which humanity and civilisation took shape, which, indeed, impart similar features to modern societies despite their essential distinctions.

The other important cause for the resemblance of different societies is rooted in the material and spiritual culture that humanity has developed, in the progress of production and science, technology, literature, and art. This progress is ultimately the result of the creative activity of all nations that contribute to the common pool of knowledge and experience. The extension of the international division of labour, the vital global problems of our time (such as preventing a nuclear war, environmental protection, closing the gap between the development levels of various countries, and so on), and the rapid advance in communications and transport—all these processes have considerably intensified the spread and exchange of cultural values.

In the first case it may be proper to refer to still surviving points of resemblance and in the second to progressing points of resemblance. And it is the latter, of course, that we must examine more closely if we want to show the source of the illusion of convergence, which is nothing but a figment of the imagination and an attempt at passing off the wish for the reality.

It would be wrong, however, to ignore the resemblances of a historical origin. Because some devotees of the convergence theory, eager to substantiate their obsession, include social phenomena that refer not to progressing but to surviving points of resemblance in their set of arguments.

This makes defining the class content or, to put it differently, the social colouring of the points of resemblance and properties of different societies, all the more important. These points and properties may be conventionally qualified as class-based and not class-based.

To be sure, in practice all or nearly all social phenomena bear the imprint of the prevailing system and class ideology. Even such seemingly non-social phenomena as technology and technics are no exception. They, too, can gain a distinct specifics in distinctive social conditions, giving rise to distinctive social consequences.

In the final analysis, the social content of all institutions and phenomena determines their historical destiny. Some (like humanitarian culture) are absorbed in 'a pure state' during changes of the social system, whereas others (exploitation of labour and all related elements) are subject to total elimination. Still others (the majority) undergo more or less substantial alterations.

Still, we must not overlook the fact that this specifics derives not from the intrinsic nature of technology and technics but from the

method of applying them in concrete social conditions. The machine or technology are *per se* products of the human brain and human labour. Seen from this angle, they have no social colouring and are inert in the class context. Their spread and the related progressing resemblance of production processes is, therefore, no argument in favour of any convergence of the social systems.

This applies to all 'not class-based' phenomena (we have put the notion in inverted commas to again emphasise that it is conventional), and it applies as well, at least to some extent, to the social institutions. A good example here of a point of resemblance of a historical origin is monogamy. Shaped by the long evolution of the human species, this form of reproducing life, of life-style, and of the relationship of the sexes has gained a stable universal quality. True, in socialist and capitalist conditions the family has substantial and in some cases fundamental distinctions. Still, monogamy as such predetermines a considerable resemblance, and this not just outwardly.

A good example of a progressing resemblance is urbanisation. For all the distinctive qualities of this process in socialist and capitalist countries, many of its features are the same. Buttressing his contention with statistics showing that urban populations are rising, that the number of 'superpolises' is going up, and so on, U. S. specialist Alex Inkeles arrives at the conclusion that the Soviet Union and the United States are on a convergence course.\* Yet this resemblance is hardly valid as an argument in favour of the convergence of the two opposite systems.

The idea voiced by West German specialist Oskar Anweiler concerning education does not stand up to criticism either. Since the scientific-technical revolution has created 'similar problems for East and West', he writes in referring to the need for polytechnical education, 'it requires answers that are in many ways not at all different' (*Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, April 1964). Past experience has shown, however, that similar problems may be resolved in quite different ways, depending on the social conditions and the aims sought by the prevailing political forces.

Now, let us look at a variant where the points of resemblance derive from imitation. The systems stand face to face. Confrontation and struggle of antipodes generate not only different and opposite processes, but also similar ones, at least similar in form. Only a close examination of the points of resemblance in different areas of

\* See Inkeles, 'The Emerging Social Structure of the World', in *World Politics*, July 1975, Princeton, p. 472.

life in the capitalist and socialist societies will show whether or not they are typical of either social system.

It seems to me that the general philosophical postulate that all clashing and competing systems interact—with one necessarily borrowing something from the other—is a key only to some similar phenomena. Mostly, there is a borrowing between countries not between systems. We could go further and say that when adopting advanced technologies, countries do not really borrow from one another but only draw from the common pool of knowledge.

But that is a secondary point. The main point is what each of the sides borrows from the other. The socialist countries are glad to exchange products of scientific and technical activity, and values of culture. In so doing, they discard anything that goes against humanism, anything hostile to social progress that has its origin in the world vision of the capitalist class, one that is on its way out.

In some cases, the socialist countries borrow elements of industrial management, that is, methods of organising or rationalising production. This mostly in areas where Western industrial development is ahead.

In his time, Lenin spoke of borrowing the system of U. S. efficiency engineer Frederick Winslow Taylor, but not before adapting it to the conditions and needs of socialist production. Taylor had produced a set of ideas on scientific management of labour, including methods of determining proficiency, of training and positioning, office procedures, gathering of information, and managerial decision-making.

While that sort of borrowing is possible and likely, we ought to set apart a special kind of 'resemblance', one that might be described as 'forced'. In substance, this concerns anything that is not immanently typical of socialism. A good example is the arming of socialist countries, imposed by the necessity of defence, by the threat of imperialist aggression.

Another example, evidently, is the negative influence of bourgeois culture. There is no denying that elements of bourgeois culture multiplied and disseminated by the mass media are liable to erode the consciousness of some sections of people in socialist countries, triggering an imitative reaction. This, however, is a transient thing. It is a reminder of the transitional nature of our era, when the old world is still strong enough to take the counter-offensive.

Summing up, we might draw the following conclusions.

*First*, there is a wide range of phenomena, whose resemblance has historical grounds. There are such among them that have not

yet been overcome and survive only due to the youth of the new system. And there are such that have become part of human culture, that are legitimately inherited and enriched by socialism as a system that is on its way to replace capitalism.

*Second*, there is a sphere of increasing resemblance stemming from the continuous development of the material and spiritual civilisation, and the internationalisation of all areas of modern society.

*Third*, there are resemblances that grow more marked because countries with different social systems borrow from one another not only cultural values, but also effective forms of management and life-style. Socialism borrows only some of these—those that, once adapted, are not contrary to the principles of the new society and are not, therefore, rejected by it as an alien body.

It is clear, therefore, that there is no convergence of socialism and capitalism in all the essential areas of surviving or increasing resemblance between individual countries representing different social systems. Socialism as a system and a sum of principles governing the social pattern, and the appropriate practices, is not gravitating towards capitalism in any way. On the contrary, as it attains maturity and ascends new, higher levels of communist construction, it moves farther and farther away from capitalism.

Does it follow that the distance between the two systems will continuously grow, augmenting the peril of a clash between the two irreconcilable class camps? This would have been inevitable if the laws of social development had not been of a universal nature. But capitalism is not eternal, and must sooner or later give place to the fitter, more progressive social system.

The mole of history, to which Marx refers, does not stop burrowing halfway. The objective movement of society from capitalism to socialism continues in keeping with the chief postulates of Marxism-Leninism.\*

On the global plane, there is a steady growth of the socialist world, coupled with the growing general crisis of capitalism; more countries and peoples are dropping out of the capitalist system and embarking on the socialist road.

On the ideological and political plane, there is a steady spread of the socialist consciousness, growth of the working-class revolutionary movement, of its influence on all areas of modern bourgeois society, and increasing instability of the political structures of state-monopoly capitalism.

\* See Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" in Marx, Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 185.

Finally, the material conditions and elements of socialism are continuing to accumulate in capitalism's economic structure. Adaptation to the new conditions of the productive forces and the competition with the socialist system, on the one hand, and the powerful pressure of the working-class and general democratic movement, on the other, have led to the nationalisation of certain leading industries, to economic programming, to state regulation of labour-capital relations, to expansion of the social security scheme, and so on. These injections of the socialist ferment are extending the life of the ageing capitalist organism. But they are also putting the finishing touches to society's preparations for socialist reconstruction. In short, even though socialism is not gravitating towards capitalism, the latter is beyond question gravitating towards socialism.

In other words, the process is quite unlike (in essence) and not quite like (in details) the one painted by the authors of convergence theories. It is not a drift of two systems towards a hybrid society or towards fusion in 'post-industrial society' where private property and related capitalist attributes would be kept intact. It is a natural historical process of humanity's advance towards socialism and communism.

There is one argument the supporters of the convergence theory often use as the pivot of their construction which, I feel, merits a closer examination. It concerns the governmental measures taken (or being taken) in socialist countries to improve the socialist economic mechanism and ensure more effective use of economic levers in furthering national economic objectives. This is taken by convergence theorists as a tacit acknowledgement of the insufficient efficiency of the system of planned regulation and as an about-face (if only partial) to the market economy.

In fact, however, these measures only show that the building of a new society involves search of solutions suiting the needs and capacities of the productive forces at any given moment, and the degree of maturity of the relations of production and of social consciousness. Underestimation of economic levers (such as profit, cost, prices governed by the law of value, and material incentives) has a negative effect on many indicators of socialist economy (especially the quality of production). No less harmful is premature renunciation of such auxiliary means of satisfying the needs of people as the collective farmers' personal plots, handicrafts, and the like.

The USSR Constitution of 1977 (Article 16) has enshrined principles providing for the optimum combination of centralised

economic planning and the economic independence and initiative of enterprises and groups of enterprises, for the application of management accounting and, for other economic levers and stimuli.

Though the concrete solutions in other socialist countries are diverse, the improvements in economic management follow the same course.

The fuller and more consistent use of value (market) elements at the present stage is certainly no sign of departure from socialist economic planning. Neither does it place in question its superiority over the capitalist economic system. This, to be sure, is acknowledged by most authors of convergence concepts. Galbraith says, for example, that market elements would play an insignificant, chiefly auxiliary, role in the economy of the future society, which he describes as 'the new socialism'.\*

This does not go to say that bourgeois political economy as a whole has any intention of renouncing the market as a regulator of economic growth. Though admitting some of its imperfections, it declares free price adjustment by the market the sole dependable means of securing effective production and quality. Bourgeois economists maintain, in fact, that the renunciation of this mechanism under socialism stands in the way of rational economic management.

As noted by Soviet economist L. A. Leontiev, this is false for two reasons. To begin with, though in the past stages of capitalism there may have been a free evolution of market prices, this is no longer the case since the big corporations and monopoly alliances have consolidated their predominance, and since the bourgeois state has stepped in with measures that regulate the economy. On the other hand, the contention that the correlation of production costs and the results of production is indeterminable in a planned socialist economy is denied by the impressive economic progress in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.\*\*

One more point: neither theory nor practice denies the possibility of using the regulating role of the market—on a limited scale and as an auxiliary (to the plan) means of registering the operation of the law of value.

The idea of the convergence theorists that socialist planning

\* John Kenneth Galbraith, *Economics and the Public Purpose*, p. 222.

\*\* See L. A. Leontiev, 'Ideinoye nasledie F. Engelsa i zadachi razoblacheniya burzhuanizma i falsifikatorov ekonomicheskoi teorii sotsializma', in *Proty burzhuanizma i mekuburzhuanizma teoryi sotsializma*, Moscow, Ekonomika Publishers, 1972, p. 15.



should blend with the capitalist-type market holds water neither economically nor sociologically. Irrespective of the system that is taken as the basis, the plan here is to transplant certain social-economic constructions and institutions on a foreign social body. And the transplant is bound to be rejected.

True, the market can and may be used in a planned socialist economy and, conversely, the plan can and may be used in a competitive capitalist economy, but this only within limits. Within limits, indeed, beyond which rejection of the transplant is sure to follow. Economic planning cannot be introduced in full volume and with all pertinent functions in a setting of private enterprise any more than the arbitrary play of the market can in a setting where public property in the means of production rules supreme.

The idea implicit in the convergence theory that the two systems borrow 'the best economic aspects' from each other is evidence of a metaphysical approach to production in total disregard of society and its laws. The forms of economy and management cannot be made to suit anybody's whim. They are predetermined by the nature of the social system, the aim of production, and the thrust of the objective economic laws. Certainly, a wide range of concrete solutions is possible within the framework of these predetermined forms, the choice depending on the specific features of the country and, notably, on its level of development. But in the case of socialism, the solutions cannot be other than socialist.

Now, the final and the weightiest argument against the oracles of convergence: borrowing the 'best sides' of capitalism is both objectively impossible and absolutely unacceptable from the standpoint of the interests of socialist society. The various qualities of capitalism that are paraded (or sincerely considered) as advantages are partly illusory and partly transient.

There are many among the devotees of the convergence theory (most of whom once belonged to the so called New Left) who sincerely aspire to a just and sensible social arrangement, but who underestimate the resources of the socialist system and are blind to its historical perspective.

Futurologists of this school acknowledge the desirability, realism and necessity of the socialist principles and institutions of public property in the means of production, of democracy and social equality, but believe that this must be rounded out by the kind of effective production and the kind of individual rights that prevail in the capitalist West.

So, let us put their views to the test. Socialism has long since proved its superiority over capitalism in rates of economic growth.

Planned economic development, absence of crises and recessions, of chronic unemployment and inflation, the workers' sense of security, and the continuous rise of living standards—all these are incontestable advantages of the socialist mode of production. They are sufficiently manifest, and this despite the fact that the countries which initially embarked on the socialist road were mostly of a low or medium economic level. This, indeed, had in many ways and up to a time predetermined the nature of their economic development, with factors of quantitative growth inevitably taking precedence.

This explains why the foremost capitalist states still retain certain advantages as regards the qualitative side of economic growth. The problem of securing a higher productivity of social labour has not been solved yet. But socialism, with its tremendous material, technical and scientific potential stemming from the merger of the scientific-technical revolution and the advantages of the new social system, is sure to cope with the problem. The problem of efficiency and quality was posed as a top priority at the 24th (1971) and 25th (1976) congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It has come to the fore in practically all the countries that have reached the stage of building developed socialism.

Now about the question of individual freedoms, which holds a central place in the battle of ideas.\* Since I have dealt with it at length in a previous study, *Socialist Democracy*, it will be enough to say here that socialism is the first system in history that provides the basic condition for freedom, namely, absence of exploitation of man by man. The new social foundation (public property in the means of production, planned economy, government of the working people under the guidance of the working class and its communist vanguard, socialist democracy) has given rise to a new system of relations between the individual and the collective, the citizen and the state, man and society. Its substance is expressed in a terse formula found in the Constitution of the USSR: 'It [socialist society—G. Sh.] is a society in which the law of life is concern of all for the good of each and concern of each for the good of all.'

The preamble to the Constitution of the USSR, which contains the above formula, also refers to the fundamental communist approach and the basic objective of society to assert and continuously expand the freedom of the individual. To begin with,

\* See Shakhnazarov, *The Destiny of the World, ... op. cit.*

economic development is subordinate to the objective of raising the well-being of the people and providing increasingly favourable conditions for the harmonious development of the personality. Further, all classes and social groups are coming closer to one another, and there is factual as well as juridical equality of all nationalities, lacking which real freedom is inconceivable. The working people participate in the life of the state, and in running the affairs of society. A wide-ranging set of social and economic rights and political freedoms is provided that are indissolubly linked with the Soviet citizen's duties and civic responsibilities, with the high degree of organisation, and the political consciousness of the working people.

The New Left recognise many of the advantages of socialism and are critical of the restricted and in many ways formal freedom in capitalist society. But they have failed to shake off some class prejudices and to understand the significance of the socialist perspective. The historically inevitable underdevelopment of the socialist principles in socialism's initial period, and breaches of these principles in separate countries, the New Left see as the final and permanent product of the socialist organisation of society.

It ought to be clear, however, that the new social relations could not be perfect the moment they were forged, that they matured by gradual stages, in step with the emergence of the corresponding economic, social and political basis and the development of people's civic consciousness. It should also be remembered that in the Soviet Union socialism matured in a hostile capitalist encirclement and that this naturally affected the course of socialist development.

With socialism growing more solid and gaining its own foundation, its humane character is becoming more and more distinct. An important milestone here is the building in the Soviet Union of a developed socialist society and the growth of the Soviet state into a state of the whole people. It is quite needless to graft elements of capitalist efficiency and bourgeois freedom on to the body of socialist society. Here, as elsewhere, the potentialities of socialism are inexhaustible, and its superiority increasingly visible.

While class prejudices prevent some convergence theorists from accepting this perspective, others advocate convergence by mistake. Finnish sociologist Arvo Tuominen, for example, says capitalism and communism are no longer as acutely at odds as they were, and have begun to move towards one another. This, he holds, is due to communism's becoming more democratic, and

capitalism's becoming more socialised. 'Let's assume,' Tuominen says, 'that capitalism is the thesis and the communist world the antithesis. In accordance with the theory and method of dialectics the battle of these opposites gives birth to something new. A synthesis occurs. This synthesis is a new type of social system, a new mode of production and a new superstructure, with many Marxist features and some capitalist ones. Capitalism may be described as the father, and the child inherits something from its parents. I hope it inherits respect for individual freedom, and for spiritual and physical freedom, which are an important part of Western democracy. From the mother, that is, from communism, it must inherit its strong sociality, planned economy, collective thinking and administration, and so on'. Adding the final touch to his idyllic picture, Tuominen says: 'To come into being, this social renewal no longer needs an explosion or violent revolution. It can occur through the process of development. If I were to try and draw its portrait, it would resemble Swedish social democracy.\* This conclusion is neither Tilsit nor Canossa. If the progeny of the two systems is expected to resemble modern Sweden, which even Social Democrats consider a wholly respectable capitalist country, what has it to do with any convergence?

Now, let's turn to the variety of convergence that came under the strongest Marxist criticism and is candidly anti-communist. Here, it is not a case of one society approaching another, and not even a meeting of the Tilsit or Canossa type, but a fusion into one society, a 'techno-nightmare' rather than a 'techno-idyll'. It is much like a 'feast at the height of the plague', one might say, when neighbour tells neighbour that both are doomed to die of the same disease.

Max Weber's idea that bureaucratic administration is an inevitable effect of the growth of technical knowledge is cited as one of its prime sources. 'It makes no difference whether the economic system is organised on a capitalistic or a socialistic basis,' writes Weber. 'Indeed, if in the latter case a comparable level of technical efficiency were to be achieved, it would mean a tremendous increase in the importance of professional bureaucrats.... A socialistic form of organisation would not alter this fact.\*\*

The rest of the argument is simple enough. Bureaucratic administration never comes alone. It brings with it an assortment of calamities that always accompany technical progress, namely:

\* Arvo Tuominen, *Myrskyn Mentyä. Kommunismien vai demokraattinen Suomi?* Kustannusosakeyhtiö Tammi, Helsinki, 1971, p. 189.

\*\* Max Weber, *Economy and Society. An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Vol. 1, Part 1, Bedminster Press, New York, 1968, pp. 223-4.

concentration of efforts on boosting consumption, with the resulting moral corruption, mass culture, rising crime, and so on. These features will in due course begin to predominate in the character of the two systems, and the distinctions in their social organisation that now appear so important will no longer have any meaning. Convergence will complete its work.

Here one cannot help recalling that twenty or thirty years ago capitalist propaganda stuck at nothing to refute the Marxist thesis that a new man was being moulded as the new world was being built. How much energy was wasted to prove that this goal was utopian and that human nature had elements in it that nothing could alter because they were rooted in the subconscious. Yet here, Communists are portrayed as wanting to create a Western style 'consumer society' or 'goulash communism'. They are charged with neglecting the spiritual side of things, with crude 'materialism'. What better proof that capitalist theoretical thought changes direction like a weathercock because it has no dependable philosophical and methodological foundation.

Now, to the essential point. Weber's notion of total bureaucracy being an inevitable companion of technical progress has not been confirmed even in modern capitalist practice. The growth rate of the managerial apparatus, which in the early sixties had occasioned predictions that by the end of the century it would absorb the bulk of the working population, has declined in recent years.

What is more, technical progress has proved an ally rather than foe in the fight against bureaucracy. To begin with, cybernetics is paving the way for automating large areas of management and, consequently, for man's concentrating on more fundamental, chiefly creative, activity. Second, thanks to computerisation and the consequent revolution in gathering, storing and processing information, management has gained a much more solid scientific grounding.

But Weber's pessimistic prediction concerned not only the physical growth of bureaucracy. The point he tried to make was that with the functions of running modern society growing more complicated and with management becoming an increasingly distinct field of knowledge involving a high degree of professionalism, active and conscious participation of the mass of the people in the managerial process would be inhibited and thereupon reduced to nought. That would make them an object of manipulation by an all-powerful bureaucratic apparatus. In other

words, Weber's construction takes us back to the old nightmare of totalitarian and uncontrolled technocratic rule.

In the previous chapter I have already endeavoured to disprove the view that technocratic dictatorship is inescapable. Let me now add that the matter hinges on the fundamental distinctions between the two systems. Unlike capitalism, socialist society, its entire economic, social and political structure, has powerful defences against the technocratic danger.

The complication of the administrative function does give rise to certain problems. But these do not prevent broad participation of the mass of the people in public and state affairs, in running production, because society has a stake in such participation, the initiative of people being a powerful motor of general progress.

It is equally groundless to refer to any ingrained viciousness of human nature as a reason for a 'nightmare' future. Even in capitalist conditions, which do warp human nature, the advanced segment of people retains a sound moral footing and is able to assume the responsibility for a sensible and just future.

Communist education in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries shows that directed and deliberate influence can and does implant and multiply the finest and loftiest human qualities.

To be sure, the convergence theorists speak not of the present but of the future. They predict that the negative moral effects of material progress already felt in the U.S.A and other industrial capitalist states will sooner or later also affect the socialist countries.

Here, it would be only fair to note that despite the relatively high standard of living in the major imperialist states, their claim to 'outrunning' the socialist countries in material well-being are unjustified. Everybody knows of the social contrasts, the widening incomes gap, and the poverty zones in the wealthy capitalist states. Still, the argument merits attention, because it applies to the higher level of consumption among the middle strata of capitalist society.

In the socialist countries, too, the danger of unhealthy 'consumerist' sentiments appearing among a certain segment of people with the rise of material well-being certainly exists, and it would be ludicrous to deny it.

But the danger is being countered by the motivated activity of the communist and workers' parties. While they work to secure a higher living standard for the working people, they also boost ideological and educational work to mould a socialist way of life, which presupposes a harmonious blend of the public and private, and the material and spiritual.



In sum, the convergence theory, predicting an escalation of negative phenomena and the ultimate merging of the social systems on this disaster course, has no basis in fact.

That the theory of convergence is vulnerable has not gone unnoticed among futurologists. Galbraith, who was one of its originators, now prefers to speak not of convergence in the immediate sense of the term but of a movement towards what he calls a 'new socialism'. He thus admits, in effect, that society cannot develop progressively unless property relations are changed. Though his 'new socialism' does not rise above reformist illusions, the fact that a leading bourgeois scholar speaks of socialism rather than 'convergence' tells its own story. Other Western authors, too, are seeking to substantially modernise the idea of convergence, even to pass it off as a Marxist idea.

U. S. economist Oleg Zinam says, for example, that there are two theories of convergence—one 'communist' and the other 'liberal'. As he sees it, there may be one of three things: convergence of a 'Marxist type', convergence of a 'Western democratic type', or neither, with both systems continuing to exist for an indefinite period—converging or diverging or developing in parallel.\*

A strange sort of forecast, isn't it? It's like a grandmaster who, asked to predict the winner, says the black will win unless the white win, provided they do not draw. The above passage is of interest solely because it betrays signs of confusion among bourgeois scholars who had for a relatively long time confidently predicted convergence.

True, it is still too early to say that the convergence slogan has been scrapped. The new aspects in the relations between socialist and capitalist states have renewed interest in the idea. Peaceful coexistence has become an area of manipulation by devotees of the convergence theory, impelling its peculiar 'revival'. In effect, Jan Tinbergen, Bohuslav Herman and some other Western economists identify the expansion of economic ties spurred by detente between states of different economic systems with convergence.

But the internationalisation of economic relations is an objective process rooted in the general laws governing the development of the productive forces. Recall Marx's observation that the 'necessity of the distribution of social labour in definite proportions cannot possibly be done away with by a particular form of social production

but can only change the mode of its appearance'.\* And one more fundamental point noted by Lenin: 'Already under capitalism all economic, political and spiritual life is becoming more and more international. Socialism will make it completely international'.\*\*

Only given a non-historical (and hence completely inaccurate) approach, can the ongoing internationalisation be identified as a force that has put the two systems on a convergence course. Internationalisation leads to an interpenetration and interaction of the productive forces, to closer relations between nations, but certainly not to convergence of their social systems. It should be seen, above all, not in terms of space but of time: begun at the dawn of civilisation, powerfully advanced under capitalism, internationalisation will be consummated thanks to socialism and communism. The policy of peaceful coexistence and the expansion of international ties and co-operation are no evidence of convergence, for they cannot alter the objective trend of the development of society towards socialism.

The same applies to reflecting objective processes in theory. Of late, some liberal futurologists have been thinking of an 'integral' theory of social development that would synthesise various future concepts, including the Marxist. Since this does not concern phenomena of the material world, it may be possible, of course, to blend elements of different (even diametrically opposite) scientific and political doctrines into some eclectic whole. A bit of sophistry and a few adroit phrases may even cover up some of the more obvious incompatibilities. But the scientific worth of this artificial creation will not be very high. All eclectic teachings known in the history of science had a short life.

This does not go to say that different schools of social thought cannot influence one another. Even incompatible theories borrow each other's techniques and, more, separate elements of the method of research. Besides, they influence each other by their mutual criticism, which draws attention to their faults and weaker points and stimulates checks and re-checks of drawn conclusions, impelling search of new arguments in their favour.

Marxism-Leninism, like any other true science, processes all the valuable elements of the latest social practice and the latest theoretical thought. Some of the observations in futurological research, too, have found a place in the general system of Marxist

\* O. Zinam, 'Peaceful Coexistence, U.S.-U.S.S.R. Detente, and the Theory of Convergence', in *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Economiche e Commerciali*, Milan, No. 1, 1976, p. 54.

\* "Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann in Hannover, London, July 11, 1868", in Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 196.

\*\* V. I. Lenin, "Theses On the National Question", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 246.

knowledge. This is a legitimate advancement of the science of society and its laws of development, and has nothing in common with any convergence. Here, Marxism is merely faithful to its mission of integrating social thought.

But futurology is far removed from the idea of 'integrating with Marxism'. Despite its obvious failures, it continues to produce new projects, some of them bizarre to the extreme, which in substance boil down to the same old 'techno-idylls' or 'hybrids of convergence'.

A few examples. U. S. lawyer Stuart M. Speiser holds that the convergence process began long ago. And he has devised a plan to further this benign process. At its core is the formation of 'new capital'. Suppose the 'real capital—or newly-formed business capital' is distributed in equal portions among the 45 million families of the United States, says Speiser, each family will have 100,000 dollars, since the new capital was about 120 billion dollars in 1976, and the total for the decade 1975-1984 will be about 4.5 trillion dollars. This distribution of property, he holds, may be carried out without impairing the existing system, since the newly-formed business capital belongs to no one. As a result, there would be 'universal capitalism'.

Even if we grant that this chimerical distribution of 'new capital' is possible, the old capital would in the meantime continue to rake in profits. Consequently, the social inequality will survive. Furthermore, it isn't clear how 'universal capitalism' could help countries where the bulk of the people live on the edge of poverty.

Still, the Joint Economic Commission of U. S. Congress set out to examine the 'promising' idea of universal capitalism, which, it said, 'would give America a decisive weapon in the global struggle against communism'.\* Here one can't help recalling Korček's fitting description of the theory of convergence as 'the friendly embrace whereby the bourgeoisie wants to squeeze the life out of socialism without any risk to itself'.\*\*

And one more 'enticing' project. French sociologist Joel de Rosnay holds that all the weaknesses and faults of modern capitalism could be eliminated by building an 'ecosociety' where the prefix 'eco' symbolises the connection between economy and ecology. Extolling the advantages of his ecosociety, Rosnay sometimes styles it 'ecosocialism'. Does this speak of his intention

to secure social equality? Not on your life. All he wants is that there should be 'peaceful coexistence between private and state property in the means of production ... free enterprise and free competition', with the sole reservation that 'enterprises are subject to the strict control of the communities of consumers and users'.\*

The 'macroscope' of the title of Rosnay's book stands for what the author describes as the sum-total of the methods and techniques he has borrowed from different disciplines for his global study of all processes that occur in nature and society, a variety of systems analysis.

There are many other 'hybrids of convergence'. But need we cite them here if all novel modifications of the theory of convergence have one common denominator: socialisation without the slightest harm befalling private capital. How all these people cudgel their brains to preserve private property! What ingenious constructions they invent to make it compatible with the pressing need for economic planning! But in all these schemes the ends do not meet, for the incompatible cannot be made compatible.

\* See Speiser, *A Piece of the Action*, Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, New York, 1977, pp. 56, 278.

\*\* Ludovít Korček, *O teóriách 'transformácie' kapitalizmu*, Pravda Publishers, Bratislava, 1972, p. 125.

\* See Rosnay, *Le Macroscopie*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, pp. 271, 274

Social Democracy is another ideological school claiming a place in the sun of the future. It merits special attention because, unlike the 'techno-idyllic', it is the official doctrine of one of the largest political movements of our time.

Though many social-democratic parties make extensive use of 'techno-idyllic' and convergence ideas in their programme documents, they give them a peculiar social complexion of their own. In short, the Social Democrats have (or are making) their own futurological concept. How novel or original it is, is a different story. The government programme of the German Social Democrats says, for example, that the social-democratic model can perfect itself and may in due course become an alternative to capitalism, on the one hand and to communism, on the other.\*

The first question I am tempted to ask is, can any new direction of social development be discovered at all in the era of the revolutionary passage from capitalism to socialism—a process that has involved a large number of countries and hundreds of millions of people, and is continuing to expand? Marxist-Leninist theory and the practical experience of the twentieth century suggest a negative answer.

But let us assume that the Social Democrats are right and an alternative course to the two social-economic systems *can* be found. In that case it will be only right to suppose that all models (capitalism, communism and social democracy) exist on an equal footing, as it were, with each country making its own choice and the world breaking up into large three independent and isolated social currents.

This linear pattern of progress does not hold water because it ignores the time factor. It suggests that each of the three 'models' is

\* See *Weiterarbeiten am Modell Deutschland, SPD-Regierungsprogramm 1976-1980*, Bonn.

eternal, not subject to change, that it cannot grow stronger or more mature or that, conversely, it cannot grow older or less potent. This is too absurd for words.

We are constrained to assume, therefore, that the SPD formula stands for a new alternative, and this to the existing socialism rather than to capitalism. That is why it was styled 'democratic socialism' and elevated to the rank of the social-democratic doctrine of the future. Let us try and examine the doctrine more or less systematically.

To begin with, what is its ideological basis or philosophy? That isn't as simple to answer as it may seem. According to the numerous declarations of authoritative social-democratic leaders and theorists, it has no world outlook (*Weltanschauung*), and is even proud of this.

West German Social Democrat Friedrich Brand gave this title to one of his articles: 'Democratic Socialism Is No World Outlook'. He maintains that 'democratic socialism' is neither a theory nor an ideology that wants to replace, much less repeal, all concepts that had come before it because they had proved impracticable or useless. On the contrary, it borrows their best elements, but not in order to bind them into a new world outlook or teaching, and merely to preserve and fructify them.\*

True, a lively discussion followed among Social Democrats whether 'democratic socialism' should be an ideology or merely a political doctrine. The dispute was joined by prominent leaders of the Socialist International, with an interesting exchange of letters between Olof Palme, Bruno Kreisky, and Willy Brandt. Palme held that 'democratic socialism' could well be considered an ideology. Brandt, on the contrary, said Social Democrats should not consider themselves bearers of some particular ideology, much less a world outlook.\*\*

But let us leave that for the Social Democrats to decide. It is quite clear, as far as we are concerned, that regardless of any claims to the contrary 'democratic socialism' is an ideology.

First of all, the Social Democrats' renunciation of a world outlook is itself a definite ideological and political standpoint, and, second, while saying that 'democratic socialism' is not and must not be an ideology, Brandt and others who think so refer to the Godesberg Programme and enumerate its 'sources', namely:

\* Friedrich Brand, 'Demokratischer Sozialismus ist keine Weltanschauung', in *Neue Gesellschaft*, Bonn-Bad Godesberg, November 1972, pp. 864-5.

\*\* Brandt, Kreisky, Palme, *Briefe und Gespräche 1972 bis 1975*, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, Frankfurt-Cologne, 1975, pp. 20 and 36.



Christian ethics, humanism, and classical philosophy. Isn't that enough to make it an ideology?

Delving into the content of some of the philosophical elements that make up the ideological substance of 'democratic socialism', its theorists (to quote Wuthe and Junker) have made 'the picture of man as outlined by the young Marx' its integrating component.\* This aspect of the matter merits a special examination, and for understandable reasons.

The genesis of present-day Social Democracy dates to the split in the working-class movement and the departure of the right-opportunist leaders of the Second International from the teaching of Karl Marx, taken further by Lenin and confirmed by the practice of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Since then, Social Democracy has passed several distinctive stages in its attitude towards Marxism—from half-hearted acceptance to total rejection. And the most peculiar feature of the present stage, it seems to me, is the coexistence of a wide spectrum of views on this cardinal issue.

The extreme right wing of the socialist and social-democratic parties, in fact, does not simply declare its final break with Marxism, but makes a boast of it, claiming credit for 'democratisation'. Its spokesmen contend that Marx's and Engels's dialectical method of social analysis is inapplicable to the realities of our time, and describe Marxism as a philosophy of 'unscientific prognosis'.\*\*

A far larger group of Social Democrats declare, with different overtones, that the legacy of Marx and Engels, the founders of revolutionary theory, has retained validity and must be used. True, they make all sorts of reservations, contrasting Marx to Lenin, the 'late' Marx to the 'young' Marx, Marx to Engels, and so on. All the same, there is a distinct wish to exploit the authority of Marx, to 'win him back' for Social Democracy, and to 'wrest him away' from the Communists.

There are many shades and hues in the Social Democrats' attitude to Marxism. Some are sincerely keen to adopt elements of Marxist theory, while others resort to the Marxist vocabulary merely for the sake of publicity. There are those who will refer to the founders of scientific communism in addressing an audience at a

\* Gerhard Wuthe, Heinz Junker, 'Demokratischer Sozialismus', in *Demokratische Gesellschaft, Konsensus und Konflikt*, first part, Günter Olzos Verlag, Munich-Vienna, 1975, p. 136.

\*\* *Kritischer Rationalismus und Sozialdemokratie*, Verlag J.H.W. Dietz, Berlin-Bad Godesberg, 1975, p. 311.

workers' club or in a university lecture hall, but will never do so at a political gathering of industrialists, for it is injudicious to wave the red flag before the noses of their financial backers. Hence, speaking of the shape of things to come, Bruno Kreisky makes this interjection: '...and I am not afraid to say so in Marx's words'.\* What extraordinary political daring indeed!

François Mitterrand, leader of the Socialist Party of France, is far more explicit. 'For the Socialist Party,' he says, 'though it does not obey any dogma and guards itself against any official doctrine, the principal theoretical legacy that inspires it is Marxist.'\*\* This, of course, should not be taken literally. While acknowledging that 'Marx's contribution to modern thought remains immense', the French Socialist Party leader says in the same breath that to his mind 'the works of Freud constitute a revolution in the world of ideas that is doubtless more important for our times than those of Marx'.\*\*\*

Joachim Steffen, a leading left-wing theorist of the SPD, claims that he studies the modern social process exclusively by the method of Marx and Engels. True, he boasts that he has managed to transcend the framework of traditional Marxism\*\*\*\* But that is another matter.

It is safe to say that Steffen and other left-wing Social Democrats are eager enough to adopt one or another side of the Marxist teaching. How serious they are about it depends on their ability to apprehend the essence of Marxism as one whole, to overcome social prejudices and rise above political preconceptions. Needless to say, taking separate provisions or passages out of context just because they 'suit' some political interest is not a very productive mode of procedure.

Wuthe and Junker, who set out to give a systematic exposition of 'democratic socialism', ask the rhetorical question of how much Marx's 'instrumentarium' could help predict the course of social development. Not much, it turns out, because the Marxist analysis is a macroanalysis. It is said to resemble a weather forecast, and to produce only long-term and large-scale prognoses.\*\*\*\*\* There-

\* Brandt, Kreisky, Palme, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

\*\* *Changer la vie. Programme de Gouvernement du Parti Socialiste. Présentation par François Mitterrand*, Flammarion, Paris, 1972, p. 10.

\*\*\* Quoted from Jean-Marie Borzeix, *Mitterrand lui-même*, Editions Stock, Paris, 1973, pp. 207-8.

\*\*\*\* See Steffen, *Strukturelle Revolution. Von der Wertlosigkeit der Sachen*, Rowohlt Verlag, Hamburg, 1974.

\*\*\*\*\* Wuthe and Junker, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

upon they say that 'democratic socialism' cannot afford to rely exclusively on Marxism and must devise its own system of forecasting the weather.

Yet, Wuthe and Junker do not confine themselves to distinctions in method only. In the teeth of their own pronouncements about macroanalysis, they maintain that the historical future cannot be scientifically predicted. This agnostic thesis they try to buttress by means of the following: socialism equals ideology, ideology embodies the aspirations of people, people's aspirations are associated with faith; since science can never be the foundation of faith, Marxist socialism cannot be a science. What could be simpler?

The two theorists display peculiar impartiality. They admit that 'democratic socialism', too, is based on a concept of a definite and desired form of society that cannot be directly deduced from empirical data, and that, therefore, in this sense it is not scientific either.\*

The objectivist 'equalisation' of the Marxist-Leninist teaching and the social-democratic doctrine of socialism on the grounds that 'both are unscientific' shows how far removed from the essence of Marxism the present-day Social Democrats are, including those who voice the wish to use the Marxist 'instrumentarium'. For do they not ascribe to Marxism that very fault of all utopian teachings which Marx and Engels had been the only ones to overcome? In our time even students who have only begun studying social science know the essence of the overturn that Marx and Engels performed in the history of social thought: discovering the preconditions for socialism in their contemporary capitalist society and thus ridding the socialist idea of its previous contemplativeness, bringing it down to earth, and giving it a strictly scientific form. But the SPD theorists, it turns out, hold that Marx, like the utopians, tailored communism out of mere hopes and ideals. They can't be serious.

By and large, if we take not the 'troublemakers' in the social-democratic camp but its main core, there are good grounds to say that 'democratic socialism' has not only departed from Marxist shores but that it has also thrown anchor in a new harbour, that it has found a new philosophy.

I refer to the so-called critical rationalism, whose origins are usually traced to Kant, but of which Max Weber is named the spir-

\* Wuthe and Junker, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

itual father, with special significance being also attributed to the works of Karl Popper, the German positivist.

British Labourite Brian Magee, for example, says that if Popper's book, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (Hutchinson, London, 1959) had appeared in English earlier (it was translated more than twenty years after it first appeared in German), the philosophy of an entire generation may have been different.\*

Putting this exuberant claim aside, it would still be useful to see what had excited admiration and why Popper was picked as the spiritual father or, more precisely, the progenitor of the social-democratic doctrine in its present form.

In *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, first published in 1935, Popper suggests a solution of the problem of induction (that is, reasoning from the particular to the general). As he sees it, no general theoretical principle, even if empirically substantiated, can be conclusively proved. Every theory is of particular significance and usable as applied knowledge for some limited period, until it is refuted and replaced by a broader, more general theory. When applying a theoretical principle in practice, he says, we thereby verify it in what is essentially an endeavour to disprove it. All human knowledge advances by the method of trial and error.

To begin with, some of these ideas were expressed long before Popper, and hold their place in various philosophical systems. And if we go to the root of the matter, we will find that the basic idea of the 'logic of scientific discovery' is nothing but an exposition in neo-Kantian terms of one of the basic principles of classical philosophy, which has been projected in depth in the teaching of Marx and Lenin. Briefly, it could be put thus: all knowledge is relative, and man's cognition of nature, society, and of himself is infinite. Those who have read Engels's *Anti-Dühring* and *The Dialectics of Nature*, or Lenin's *Materialism and Empiriocriticism* will be sure to recall how profoundly and clearly the basic points of the theory of knowledge are set out in them, including the question of the criteria of the truth of human knowledge and the question of the absolute truth emerging from a set of relative truths.

The proofs that Popper brings forth to justify his ideas are not novel either. We all know the example with Newton's and Einstein's theories of the Universe. The laws of mechanics discovered by the great English scientist explained the forms of motion at ordinary velocities, but could not, naturally, answer questions pertaining to velocities of a higher order, especially those

\* *Kritischer Rationalismus...*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

exceeding the velocity of light. So, when Einstein formulated the theory of relativity, it proved to be more general in relation to a particular case, that is Newton's mechanics. Much the same is true of the relation of Euclidean geometry to the geometry of Nikolai Lobachevsky.

Popper has admittedly improved on the notions of knowledge in some ways. But this does not make him the herald of a new era in philosophy, as the social-democratic theorists would have us believe. So, what excited their admiration? The fact that his concept, which denies the possibility of firm, reliable knowledge and, hence, of anticipation on the basis of objective laws of social development, is an ideal philosophical basis for their reformist doctrine. This is attested by Peter Glotz, a leading theorist of modern West German Social Democracy, who observes that 'critical rationalism is, therefore, if you like, a theory of reformism'.

If any attempt at anticipating the more or less distant future, and all the more, if tackling any political objective with an eye to the long term is according to Popper something akin to quackery, then, of course, it is only right to systematically alter separate institutions and establishments, and to tackle particular problems only, doing so gradually, step by step. According to Popper, the only constructive means of transforming the world is that of 'social engineering'.

In the final analysis, as it is easy to see, the role of critical rationalism boils down to substantiating methods of social action. As for offering an effective programme, neither Popper nor any other exponent of neopositivism, none of his disciples and successors, has any ideas on that score. It may seem strange that a doctrine which, in fact, lays no claim to any vision of the future has been selected as the ideological foundation of 'democratic socialism'. But here you have the essence of Social Democracy, which shies away from positive programmes and confines itself to merely determining the means of advance.

This does not go to say that the advocates of 'democratic socialism' set no objectives at all. First, they envisage the quantitative improvement of the social reality that can be secured by reforms. Second, they have a strong enough opinion on the basic aspects of the historical future. To be sure, this opinion is of a negative nature, and is useless for a positive programme (here they

\* Glotz, *Der Weg der Sozialdemokratie. Der historische Auftrag des Reformismus*, Verlag Fritz Molden, Vienna-Munich-Zurich, 1975, p. 69.

are entirely faithful to Popper's concept), amounting in effect to a renunciation of the traditional socialist slogans.

If a teaching contains any trace of programmatic aims, this must in one way or another be reflected in its definition. If this is not done, the definition will reflect a vacuum. Here is one definition (by Wuthe and Junker): 'Democratic socialism is... a science-oriented practical action concept. It is open to disparate philosophical or religious motivations of the fundamental ethical attitude and the various theoretical scientific concepts that enable it continuously to critically verify its aims and means' (*op. cit.*, p. 143).

What strikes the eye is that the 'democratic socialism' concept is here reduced to method, while aims, let alone the end goals, are totally ignored. Furthermore, the latter part of the definition makes 'democratic socialism' ideologically omnivorous and is obviously prompted by the political objective of winning all comers, indiscriminately, to its side. But can a programme be taken in earnest if, while it claims to be science-oriented, it is open to any and all 'motivations', including religious ones?

Much the same definition, though inside-out, is to be found in the already cited paper by Peter Glotz. He defines reformism as a process requiring substantiation in a 'practicable concept of democratic socialism', on the one hand, and as a 'social technique', on the other (*op. cit.*, pp. 97-101). This equation, too, tends to identify 'democratic socialism' as a philosophy of practical action.

But let us put all general definitions aside for a time, and see what specific aims and means are given in the programme documents of the Social Democrats. In so doing, bear in mind that every more or less substantial trend of the social-democratic movement is liable to have its own slogans and ideas. Especially active on the theoretical plane are the socialist parties of Austria and France, the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, and the Labour Party of Great Britain. Naturally, the other national social-democratic organisations also have their particular standpoints. In that sense, they may all be said to follow the postulate of one of the pillars of social-reformism, Karl Renner: 'In substance, there must be as many socialisms as there are states and countries on earth' (*Der Kampf*, No. 6, 1928, Vienna).

The value of the various programme documents for our examination of 'democratic socialism' is therefore only relative. Furthermore, the concept itself has come into the world as the social-democratic ideology in comparatively recent times. Its intensive propagation may be traced to the Social Democrats' wish of coping with the crisis of their movement caused by the disaffec-



tion of large groups, especially youth and progressive intellectuals, traceable to the drab and prosaic slogans of the right-wing social-democratic leadership in the past decades. This is why world outlook *motifs* may be said to be a sign of the times, distinguishing the programmes of socialist and social-democratic parties in the period since 1950 from those that went before.

There are programme documents that, in effect, constitute the ideological foundation of Social Democracy, if only because they are quoted more often by its theorists, and treated as gospel. This applies to the Frankfurt Declaration of the Socialist International (1951), the Vienna Programme of the Socialist Party of Austria (1958), the Bad Godesberg Programme of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (1959), the programme of the Swedish Social Democrats (1960), the so-called Fundamental Programme of the Social Democratic Party of Denmark (1961), the governmental programme of the Socialist Party of France, the programme documents of the British Labourites, and certain others.

After the Bad Godesberg Programme of the SPD proclaimed the idea of 'democratic socialism', the West German Social Democrats had to define what it meant and how they would go about putting it into effect. The Saarbrücken Congress of the SPD set the objective of drawing up a programme of reforms. Then a group headed by Helmut Schmidt drafted the economic and political orientation of the SPD for 1973-1985 (abbreviated, Long-Term Programme). At the Congress in Hannover (1973) the project came under fire from, among others, the Young Socialists, and a new group was formed to revise it. Thereupon, a document named *Orientierungsrahmen für die Jahre 1975-1985* (OR-85) was examined at a board meeting of the SPD in early 1975. Now it represents the last word in social-democratic ideology.

Taking the first things first, let us examine the question of property, that question of questions for any socialism. The Bad Godesberg Programme says: 'Private ownership of the means of production can claim protection by society as long as it does not hinder the establishment of social justice.' If this were all, one would be justified to assume that this meant gradual elimination of private property in keeping with the traditional reformist road to socialism.

But the Bad Godesberg Programme goes on to proclaim 'free competition' and 'freedom for employers to exercise their initiative' as crucial elements of the social-democratic economic policy. From this it is clear that, though the authors of

the Programme did see fit to mention social justice, they have no intention of securing it by any infringement on private enterprise.

Here, one can't help recalling the 'laws of robotechnics' formulated by Isaac Asimov, the American science fiction writer. A situation occurs in one of his books that denudes their intrinsic contradiction: a robot encounters an insoluble logical problem and prefers to commit suicide. It is indeed hard to understand from the social-democratic programme whether private property is to be restricted in the name of social justice or whether no restrictions are to be tolerated since private property is, according to the Bad Godesberg Programme, one of the inalienable rights of the individual and a basic pillar of social order.

The above formula concerning property has, in effect, suffered no modifications in the subsequent Long-Term Programme of the SPD, with just slight amendments in the OR-85 document. But the latter, too, stresses that both private property in the means of production and free competition are so far inevitable. The reason: nothing but competitive free enterprise can secure a high rate of production growth.

But we'll return to that argument, on which reposes all but the entire concept of 'democratic socialism'. At present, let me merely stress that other social-democratic documents, too, are oriented on an at least long-term, if not eternal, survival of private property. Kreisky says, for example, that the right to private property must be preserved as the 'supreme manifestation of democracy', and that Social Democracy therefore renounces Marx's slogan of expropriating the expropriators. Kreisky would go no further than partial nationalisation, provided the circumstances were favourable and there was no coercion.\*

The Vienna Programme of the Socialist Party of Austria, adopted in 1958, says it is the aim of the SPA to create a classless society. How this goal can be aligned with the survival of private property is a puzzle which, indeed, set off a lively discussion when the new SPA programme was being drawn up (see *Die Zukunft*, Vienna, No. 19, 1976, pp. 8-15).

If the question of property is the question of questions of any socialist theory, the question of power is a close second. Yet there is nothing resembling a clear statement of intention this score in any of the social-democratic programmes. As a rule, there are very

\* Bruno Kreisky, *Aspekte des demokratischen Sozialismus*, List Verlag, Munich, 1974, p. 108.

general references to statehood, to its positive and negative sides, to what the relation between the state and the economy should be, as well as that between the state and the trade unions, the political parties, and so on.

In the OR-85 document of the SPD the piece on the state is accompanied by critical remarks about Marxist-Leninist theory. There is also criticism of the bourgeois conception of the state (of the mercantilist era) as a 'night watchman' whose sole mission is to ensure public order, and never to interfere in any economic and social processes.

The programme is against everybody. It attacks those who think the state is a hundred-per cent class instrument. It attacks those who think the state is a supra-class organism. It also attacks those who consider the state a suitable tool for social improvements, and those who do not so consider it, and so on.

In fact, the supporters of 'democratic socialism' are at odds not only with everybody else, but also with themselves, for on the issue of the state they display their usual duality, half-bakedness, and eagerness to please all interests and social forces, often of polar complexions. On reading the SPD document, one can only come to the conclusion that the 'rule of law' state in the Federal Republic is all but the acme of creation, the ideal political instrument that would carry out all the requisite reforms and bring society to socialism.

In other words, the Social Democrats' conception of the state is blind to the reality shown by Marx and amply confirmed in practice: a bourgeois state is and always has been the tool of bourgeois political rule in general, and that of its governing monopoly section in particular. This is true despite the workers' having won certain political outposts and channels of influence, and the state machine's having to reckon with this influence.

Earlier, we asked how the goal of classless society (or even of 'democratic socialism' as at present conceived by its supporters) can go along with the survival of private property in the means of production. The same applies to the question of power, and the state. How can principles of justice and freedom go along with the survival of what is by nature a bourgeois state where the main levers of power are in the hands of monopoly capital?

As legitimately noted by Willi Getms, a prominent personality in the CP of Germany, there is no example in history of the coexistence of capitalism and worker power, of large-scale capitalist and socialist property, of capitalist anarchy and socialist planning (see *Marxistische Blätter*, Frankfurt, No. 1, 1977).

The answer to how the principles of justice and freedom can be made compatible with the survival of a bourgeois state machine is another secret that Social Democracy has vainly tried to break since the time of Bernstein, its primogenitor.

Why do people who know the fundamentals of theoretical thinking and who are old hands at ideological research are so unproductively stubborn in their bid to reconcile incompatibles instead of settling the matter in the only possible way, and adopting the slogans of socialist revolution? Because, first, that is the class nature of Social Democracy and, second, right-wing Socialists have no faith in the constructive potential of the socialist system.

That was made more than clear by Bruno Kreisky. Discussing the history of Social Democracy, he singled out three stages. The first goes back to the end of the past century when Social Democrats were principally enlighteners who sought to bring home to the proletariat its mission in history and simultaneously make them fight for political democracy. The second approximately dates to the early twentieth century, when Social Democrats fought to become an active and influential force, and thereby contribute to the emergence of a welfare society. The third is the present stage when, Kreisky holds, the Social Democrats must work for the universal democratisation of the system, which has reached a high level of material and technical development.

'We Social Democrats are of the opinion,' he writes, 'that the development towards social democracy is a continuous dialectical process between what is and what should be' (Kreisky, *op. cit.*, p. 55). Take note that the leader of the Austrian Socialists uses the concept of Social Democracy as a synonym of 'democratic socialism'. And one more thing: setting forth his view of the aims of the movement, he does not, in substance, conceal his doubts about the efficiency of 'socialised' forms of life.

For while proclaiming the establishment of a 'rule of law' state with fairly extensive social functions as a goal of Social Democracy, Kreisky makes the reservation that these functions cannot be boundless because they depend on the state's ability to finance various social undertakings. 'The best social reforms will remain on paper if we are not in a position to become rich enough not only to fairly distribute the burden of these social reforms, but also to take it wholly upon ourselves' (Kreisky, *op. cit.*, p. 135). A very definite hint this that Socialists must practice restraint in pressing home their ideals if they want to avoid disrupting the private enterprise economy.

In other words, Kreisky's socialism boils down to mere distribution of that portion of the profit which capitalist monopoly and the bourgeois state can painlessly earmark for social needs. What he counts on is that the profit in general, and the portion of it that falls to the Social Democrats for distribution to the working people, is big enough. But wouldn't that be a 'socialism' built on tips or leftovers from the master's table?

This approach may be inspired equally by a concern for improving the working people's life and the wish to prolong the life of the capitalist system. According to French politologist Maurice Duverger, 'capitalism is viable today only by grace of the part-socialism that it contains' (Duverger, *Janus. Les deux faces de l'Occident*, Fayard, Paris, 1972, p. 162).

In his bid to explain, if not vindicate, his concern for preservation of the pillars of the old society in economy and politics, Kreisky observes that the important thing for 'democratic socialism' is not who owns the means of production, but who controls them (Kreisky, *op cit.*, pp. 130-2). A familiar argument that, equally popular among the authors of 'techno-idylls', concepts of convergence, and theorists of 'democratic socialism'. What does not seem to sink in is that he who owns also controls. If this were not so, and if by virtue of workers' 'participation' the owners of capital were deprived of the last say, why should anyone be so felicitous about their 'sacred' right to own property?

Let us now see how the concrete programme aims of Social Democracy are formulated. The OR-85 document of the SPD says they amount to freedom, justice, and solidarity. The Fundamental Programme of the Social Democratic Party of Denmark says that 'the aim of democratic socialism is to emancipate the individual, to provide him with security and the opportunity for free development accompanied by a sense of responsibility to the community.'\*

Beautiful formulas. But in what concrete way are the formulated aims to be secured? The Social Democrats in the FRG say in their programme document that they are working to carry out the following tasks: to preserve the already reached level of spiritual and political freedoms and to secure their further development; to achieve economic development that would be less beset by fluctuation, given a growing quantity of goods and services; to modernise the economy, level up its structure and improve its regional distribution; to ensure control by society over the apportioning of power in the economic sphere; to secure participation of the work force in administration at all levels; to

\* See *Demokratiet—vor vej til Socialismen*, Copenhagen, 1975.

establish a more just and uniform distribution of incomes, property, and participation in the affairs of state irrespective of social origin and sex; to provide all people with equal opportunities for free development and socio-political self-determination through educational reform; to provide everybody with a work place according to ability; to ensure equal opportunities for groups of people who are in a dependent position, especially for women; to create more favourable conditions in urban and other overpopulated areas.

If they want a consistent and radical solution of all these important problems, they will evidently, in the end, have to espouse socialist principles. For how, say, can a work place be ensured for everyone (that is, how can unemployment be ended) in a society where the capitalist system causes anarchy of production? Or how can equal opportunities be provided for the free development of all where less than two per cent of the population own half the national wealth?

These particular problems and 'intermediate' tasks bring us back to the general question: how to erect a society of social justice without infringing on the cornerstones of the old social order—private property and capitalist power? Can it be done by reforms lasting five hundred or a thousand years? But who will grant the Social Democrats so much time when social phenomena and the scientific-technical revolution are spurring the development of society, are necessitating extraordinary and urgent measures, and are requiring the burning problems facing humanity to be solved without further delay?

Italian Socialist Carlo Maurizi says that 'on the ideological plane all the socialist parties of Western Europe are in approximately the same boat. They have emasculated their grand designs by endless compromise, and have at best retained a programme that they have to continuously revise in order to replace what their adversaries have stolen or time has destroyed' (*Critica Sociale*, Milan, January 1975, p. 622).

Quite true. The declarations of the Social Democrats are sometimes hard to distinguish from those of bourgeois liberal, even conservative, parties. Take the outcome of a poll among senior school children in Bavaria. They were asked to identify passages from the programme statements of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the Christian Social Union (CSU), and the National Democratic Party (NDP). While the passage from the neo-Nazi declaration was identified fairly accurately, with 49 per cent rightly ascribing it to the NDP,



the identification of the other three passages demonstrated obvious confusion. The SPD statement was attributed to the CSU by 28 per cent and, conversely, the CSU statement was attributed to the SPD by 30 per cent (see, *Marxistische Blätter*, Frankfurt, No. 2, 1976, p. 59).

The central slogan of the Bad Godesberg programme of the SPD was: 'Private enterprise wherever possible and public regulation wherever necessary.' Re-wording the formula, West German economist Rüdiger Bernd Wersich wrote that the purpose of the Social Democrats was 'to operate industry as productively as possible, and to share out its profits as fairly as possible among the members of society'. As he put it aptly, 'it is farthest from their thoughts to slaughter the capitalist cow for purely ideological reasons, for they still intend to milk it profitably for their social reforms' (*Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, Bonn, 11 May 1974, p. 29).

The programme of Social Democracy (or the doctrine of 'democratic socialism') boils down to a series of reforms designed to improve certain sides of capitalist society, to 'socialise' the economy and the state and, in the final analysis, to run the capitalist economy more effectively than the bourgeoisie. So, I am only reinforced in my opinion that, in effect, it is the intention of the right-wing Socialists to 'put the brakes on' history somewhere halfway between capitalism and socialism.

Certainly, there is also a different current in the social-democratic movement. And it is fairly insistent in its efforts to return to the revolutionary slogans of abolishing all private property in the means of production, and of turning over all power to the labouring classes. It stands for alliance with the Communists in the name of these goals. The division into a right and a left wing is, indeed, an almost permanent state of Social Democracy as political and ideological movement.

What is the outlook for the Social Democrats? In very general terms, the answer may be the following: If they shift to revolutionary positions they will play an important and constructive role in reconstructing society. If, however, the right wing continues to set the tune, limiting their task to mere therapy, designed to hinder a change-over of social and economic system, they will unavoidably share the ultimate fate of capitalism. In that case, individuals and large groups will abandon Social Democracy, for they will not want to remain committed to an outdated current. No, 'democratic socialism' is no answer to the issue facing the working-class movement in these final decades of the twentieth century. It is, indeed, an evasion of the issue.

In some situations, it is true, social movements are unable to see their historical future, and are compelled to function in the dark. The present situation, however, is different. With the passage from capitalism to socialism as clearly inevitable as it is now, any advocacy of 'small steps' and any rejection of the strategic aims of the working-class movement is, deliberately or not, rank self-deceit and deceit of the workers.

How, then, to explain why right-wing Socialists cling to obviously bankrupt half-and-half policies? Is it a peculiar show of loyalty to the opportunist leaders of the Second International? Yes, ideological traditionalism is a significant element in the views of the present-day social-democratic theorists. Many of their principles have their origin in the works of Karl Kautsky, Eduard Bernstein, Max Adler, Otto Bauer, Harold Laski, and Leon Blum.

It stands to reason, however, that traditionalism is not the sole source of the present-day opportunism. Neither does it stem from mere underestimation of the potentialities of socialism. It also stems from overestimation of the potentialities of capitalism.

With the general crisis of capitalism growing deeper, and with the monopoly bourgeoisie compelled to resort to emergency measures in order to survive in the competition with the socialist world system, it is to capitalism's advantage to place government in the hands of social-democratic parties, provided they do not encroach on private property. Making this 'concession' in the setting of unfavourable economic conditions, social-democratic governments have often lost votes in elections, and moved back to the opposition benches.

But in the more recent decades there has been a temporary boom. The resultant relative prosperity in a group of industrialised capitalist states, portrayed by imperialist propaganda as the natural state of the modern, slightly 'reformed' capitalism, has, among other things, had the political and ideological effect of hardening the right-wing Socialists' partiality for the private-enterprise economy; giving them the notion that an era of social-democratic rule based on class co-operation is around the corner. The certain rise in living standards associated with such rule in the minds of many people in industrialised capitalist states, the influence of socialist and social-democratic parties has, indeed, gone up, and their corps of electors has expanded.

According to *The Economist*, in the mid-seventies more than half the cabinet portfolios in the West European countries (125 out of 231) were held by Social Democrats. This led to the conclusion that Social Democrats were likely to become the predominant force

in Western Europe by 1995. True, the authors made the reservation that this depended on the Social Democrats' finding the answers to five questions: Can the Social Democrats supplant the Communists as the major left-wing force in France and Italy? Can the Socialists break down religious inhibitions, particularly among Roman Catholic voters? Can Social Democrats survive the transition to service-dominated economies? Will the trade union links of the social-democratic parties continue to be an electoral asset? Will they still produce leaders that win elections? (see *The Economist*, 29 Nov.-5 Dec. 1975).

Outside Europe, the Social Democrats are far weaker. Out of the 35 parties in the Socialist International, for example, only twelve are non-European, with only seven in economically underdeveloped countries. In only two of the non-European states—Japan and Israel—Social Democrats are prominent on the political scene. The biggest of the non-European socialist parties, that of India, has 215,000 members. All in all, some 15 million members of 55 socialist and social-democratic parties come under the direct influence of Social Democracy.\*

Left-leaning U. S. politologist Michael Harrington holds that the outlook for social progress in the United States depends on the eventual emergence of a strong social-democratic movement based on the labour unions and part of the Democratic Party.

In a critical assessment of Harrington's concept, *Political Affairs*, the U. S. communist journal, notes that he is offering the American working class 'the road of "socialist capitalism"' (see 'Harrington's Socialism' in: *Political Affairs*, November 1972, p. 57).

The parties affiliated with the Socialist International are eager to spread their ideology and political doctrine in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In recent years, this objective was taken up at nearly all the congresses of the Socialist International, while social-democratic 'missionaries' literally thronged the zone of the national liberation movement, recommending local leaders to take on the ideas of 'democratic socialism' adjusted and adapted to the needs of the developing countries.

And after they found that social-democratic reformism evoked but meagre response in the former colonies and dependencies, where vital objectives of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution held the spotlight, the following strategy was devised: to form regional leagues out of local political currents close to the

\* See Janusz W. Golebiowski, *Ideologia i polityka współczesnej socjaldemokracji*, Wiedza powszechna, Warsaw, 1974.

Socialist International to conduct propaganda and gradually gather influence. The first attempt at creating such a centre was made in Asia. In 1953, convening in Rangoon, the socialist parties of Japan, Indonesia, Burma, India, Pakistan, the Lebanon, Israel, Nepal, and Malaya inaugurated the Asian Socialist Conference. It adopted a declaration, Principles and Objectives of Socialism, stressing their ideological affinity with European Socialism but also renouncing blind imitation of its impulses and achievements.

"While the democratic, egalitarian and distributive impulses and achievements of European Socialism evoke the admiration of Asia, Asian Socialism must be dynamic instead of gradual, and must develop its own methods of peaceful mass action. ('Principles and Objectives of Socialism', in *Yearbook of the International Socialist Labour Movement 1956-1957*, Lincoln-Prager Int. Yearbook Publ. Co., London, 1956, p. 85)

In the mid-sixties, the Asian Socialist Conference broke up. This was evidently taken into account when planning Socialist International action in Latin America. It was decided not to hurry with any regional centre and, for a start, to prepare an 'ideological foundation' and tighten contacts. The conference of leaders of the social-democratic parties of Europe and Latin America that gathered in Caracas in May 1976 noted in a declaration that its participants did not aim to create a new international political organisation, and merely expressed the wish that their gathering should be followed by others in which 'the related parties of other regions can partake'.\* The sense of this is clear: to prevent the emergence of rival independent organisations, and to work for the unification of all social-democratic currents.

Representatives of a number of African parties gathered in Dakar in 1977 with the aim of founding an African Socialist International. The sponsors were the ruling parties in Senegal and Tunisia. But the draft charter submitted to the meeting failed to win general approval and the unification of the socialist parties of Africa was put off.

That, in brief, sums up the organisational efforts of the Socialist International to expand from a predominantly West European into a worldwide political and ideological centre. The future success of these efforts will understandably depend on how the doctrine of 'democratic socialism' is adapted to the needs of economically underdeveloped countries. Elements of such adaptation may be found in many of the documents issued over the past decades.

\* 'Declaration of Caracas. Adopted by the Conference for International Democratic Solidarity (Caracas, 23-25 May 1976)', in *Socialist Affairs*, 1976, Vol. 26, Nos. 4-5, p. 97.

The programmes of the social-democratic parties of the former metropolitan countries, such as Britain, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, and documents of the Socialist International admit that capitalism has failed in its approach to international economic problems, that the old system has discredited itself, and that new, socialist solutions are essential to overcome backwardness.\* But their slogans fail to produce any composite idea of the road to socialism in the peculiar conditions of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, nor can they produce one. For the 'democratic socialism' doctrine is, in essence, oriented on developed capitalism and its improvement by means of reform, and cannot be a theoretical instrument for the revolutionary reconstruction of backward or outdated social and economic structures.

Some ideologists of Social Democracy admit that 'democratic socialism' is practically a synonym for 'Eurosocialism' and has no chance of becoming the dominant ideology of the liberation movement. But the right-wing leaders of the movement do not want to wait until theorists invent a 'universal demosocialism', and are out to capture bridgeheads on all continents. Their efforts are directed, first and foremost, against the Marxist-Leninist ideology. This is evident from the following passage in the political resolution of the Thirteenth Congress of the Socialist International:

'Since it rehabilitates man in the face of oppression and aggression by capitalism and by communism, socialism is the only possible meeting place for all oppressed peoples... Only democratic socialism is capable of meeting the deepest aspirations of mankind.'\*\*

This is a now familiar claim to a 'third way'. It speaks of the social-democratic right wingers' intention not only to reject co-operation with the Communists, but also to spread the political struggle against them to new spheres.

French Socialist Jean-Pierre Biondi has even gone to the length of inventing the term 'third socialism' (Biondi, *Le tiers-socialisme*, Flammarion, Paris, 1976).

Here, naturally, the logic of political competition takes precedence over any concern to resolve the problems of the developing countries. The British Labourites say, for example, that if they do not 'assist colonial peoples to develop their own democratic societies [read the Labour version of 'democratic

\* Thirteenth Congress of the Socialist International, Geneva, 1976, Resolution on International Economic Solidarity, in: *Socialist Affairs*, No. 1, 1977, p. 34.

\*\* Ibid., p. 32.

socialism'—G. Sh] ... these peoples will be lost to the cause of political democracy'.\* The resolution of the 10th Congress of the Socialist International, too, says that the non-aligned countries should not be allowed to come under the control of communism.\*\* Doesn't this make it more than clear that the people who adopted these resolutions are not acting from the positions of a 'third force', but from the positions of capitalism and imperialism.

But let's go back to the main zone of social-democratic activity. What gives the social-democratic leaders the hope of gaining predominant political influence in the industrialised capitalist states is the relative breadth of their parties' social base. The traditional segment of workers in these parties is fairly large, though of late their ranks are filling up chiefly with technicians and engineers, and people from what are called the middle classes.

At the Hannover Congress of the SPD in 1972 it was announced that 28 per cent of the newly-registered members were workers, against 55 per cent in 1962 (see Glotz, *op. cit.*, p. 220). Citing these figures, Glotz says that the strategy of structural reforms is impracticable for a party like the SPD, which is now a middle-class rather than a workers' party.

It would seem that Britain's Labour Party has a sounder working-class foundation since the trade unions, embracing the bulk of the country's workers, are its collective members. But we must not forget that, as always, the decisive force in Labour's structure is the parliamentary party, which consists mainly of the 'middle class', one-third being lawyers and teachers. When citing these facts, British journalist Peter Jenkins declared: 'The Labour Party is not a workers' party: it is a party for the workers' (*The Political Quarterly*, Oct.-Dec. 1975, London).

The social structure of the Socialist Party of France, in 1973, was: farmers (1.4%), high and medium-echelon employees (51.1%), teachers (24.9%), workers and low echelon employees (11%), students (7.8%), clergymen (0.3%), housewives (0.5%), and pensioners (3%).\*\* That year about 36 per cent of those who voted for the Socialists were workers.\*\*\*

The wide social spectrum of the socialist and social-democratic parties is, evidently, largely due to the fact that their programmes

\* *Labour's Colonial Policy*, Vol. 1, *The Plural Society*, Transport House, London, 1956, p. 45.

\*\* See *Socialist International Inform.*, London, No. 9, 1966.

\*\*\* See *Projet*, Paris, No. 88, 1974.

\*\*\*\* See *Sondages*, Paris, No. 1, 1973.



are so drawn up as to contain something of interest for all the main social groups.

The leadership of the Social Democratic Party of Sweden, for example, has a way of killing two birds with one stone. At its 1972 Congress, it adopted two documents. The first (on economic policy) contained a list of concrete political demands, which, in effect, reflected the interests of big capital. The second (on social equality) was produced to satisfy the demands of the party's left wing and contained a set of general proposals of a radical nature, but no practical measures (see *Socialistisk debatt*, Stockholm, No. 7, 1972).

This flirting with different social groups, often with different, even opposite and hostile, class interests and aspirations, may give the Social Democrats an edge in elections, but makes their political influence unstable and precarious in the longer term.

There is, however, a factor that works for the Social Democrats and gives credibility to the predictions that they may soon head governments in most of the West European states—it is the orientation of the social-democratic parties in the field of foreign policy.

Despite the strongly anti-communist views of the right-wing Socialists, and despite the fact that in most programme documents and political statements the present and future of Social Democracy is associated with imperialist alliances, such as NATO, the movement has in the main taken a positive stand in the matter of international detente. More, many of its prominent leaders (Brandt, Schmidt, Kreisky, Palme, Wilson, Mitterand) were among those farsighted Western statesmen who backed the change of course from cold war to peaceful coexistence.

The longing for peace and the understanding of the dangers of nuclear world war is spreading among ever wider segments of people in the capitalist world. This gives the Social Democrats cause to expect that their foreign-policy orientation will yield them extensive support among the working people. It is, indeed, safe to say that a substantial section of social-democratic voters are peace champions who vote as they do because the social-democratic parties have taken a more or less rational view on crucial points of foreign policy.

In sum, three factors speak in favour of the prediction that the immediate political future of the industrialised capitalist states will largely be shaped by Social Democrats. One, the 'eclecticism' of their programme and hence the relatively wide spectrum of their supporters. Two, the accumulated experience of 'good capitalist administration' with a comparatively good state of business. Three, a fairly rational foreign policy.

Certainly, there are other factors. One of them is the ability to produce charismatic leaders, though, naturally, they usually come on the stage at critical turning-points and in association with new, popular policies. The charisma and authority of Willy Brandt, for example, obviously derive from his having been an initiator of the Ostpolitik, which led to the conclusion of treaties with the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, and to a number of other agreements that gave a start to the process of European detente.

But though there are these and other important factors in favour of the Social Democrats, there is one exceedingly grave factor that may destroy, or at least seriously reduce, their chances of winning in most of the West European states by 1995, as *The Economist* so enthusiastically predicted. That factor is the aggravation of the general crisis of capitalism, its ever more visible intrinsic flaws, and the need for more radical solutions in all fields—the economy, politics, ideology, and international relations.

This is the opinion not only of the Marxists. Many Social Democrats, notably those of the left wing, are disturbed about the future of their movement and are raising the alarm. They demand a more radical action programme that would meet the hopes and aspirations of the workers and other labouring strata.

The demands for change go far beyond the correctives introduced in the propaganda tactics of the social-democratic parties. Neither are they met by the peculiar 'seasonal' fluctuations of the political line depending on the place of the parties in the 'government-opposition' formula. At this time there is a real rather than speculative leftward shift of West European Social Democracy or, at least, of a part of its ranks.

Graphic evidence of this is the organisational form taken by the left wing in practically all large social-democratic parties. There is the *Tribune* group of some 80 Labour MPs in Britain,\* and the so-called Young Socialists in the FRG. Though the SPD leadership has gone out of its way to 'integrate' the radical youth and dampen its rebellious mood, the Jusos continue to exist.

Referring to the Jusos, U.S. politologist Henry Pachter wonders 'whether the young enthusiasts will become "canal diggers", too, or whether the straw fire of revolutionary enthusiasm will burn itself out'.\*\* By 'canal diggers' German Social Democrats mean

\* See Eric Heffer, 'Two Labour Parties or One?', in *The Political Quarterly*, Oct.-Dec. 1975.

\*\* Pachter, 'A Left Turn Among German Socialists', in *Dissent*, New York, summer 1973.

reformists working assiduously for the benefit of society with no specific plans for the future. Certainly, some Jusos will drift from radicalism to the traditional social-democratic policies. But that the current emerged at all is surely symptomatic.

The French social-democratic movement, too, has a group of left-wingers with a centre for the study and propagation of socialism (C.E.R.E.S.). This centre, say two of its theorists, has since its foundation in 1966 attempted 'to understand and transform the world on the basis of a revived Marxism, and this not only by taking account of the new data and achievements of science (the alienations in developed capitalist society, the rise of the Third World and of racism, and psychoanalysis), but also through association with the struggles that developed after May 1968'. They describe C.E.R.E.S. as a means of transforming the Socialist Party.\*

The C.E.R.E.S. seeks closer relations with the Communist Party of France, and tries to guide all French Socialists in the same direction. The two authors quoted above note: 'A new stage is opening now in which the stake is to learn if the Socialist Party—and more generally the French Left—is capable for the first time in history of blending the conditions for the passage to socialism in a developed country' (*op. cit.*, p. 24).

The other thing that betrays a certain leftward shift is the greater internal criticism of programme documents, especially the reformist provisions designed to secure the survival of capital. Though the criticism comes mostly from the left wing, it is gaining an ever greater response in the social-democratic movement as a whole.

In October 1974 a congress gathered in Paris, attended by representatives of the Socialist Party, the United Socialist Party, certain trade unions, and a few political groups. Some passages in the 'Social Project: For Socialism' adopted by the congress are of unquestionable interest:

— 'The Socialists did not invent the class struggle: it is a fact. And the reality consists in recognising that this motor of social change has not stopped playing its role even though its frontiers are changing...

— 'The example of May 1968 shows that a mass upsurge, however important it may be, has its limitations if deprived of a political outlet...

— 'There is only one way of eliminating these contradictions and of succeeding in this unification: to include all these struggles

\* See Michel Charzat et Ghislaine Toutaine, *Le C.E.R.E.S. Un combat pour le socialisme*, Calmann-Lévy, Paris, 1975, pp. 15-16, 21.

(including the election campaigns) and all these aspirations in a global political battle envisaging conquest of the State, its transformation, and, in due course, the overthrow of the power of the dominant class...

— 'The hour has struck for a Europe of the peoples, a Europe of the working people, a Europe of a collectively managed economy, a Europe of collectively guaranteed freedoms... The Europe we conceive will not secure its own development by exploiting the rest of the world in competition or in complicity with American imperialism.\*\*

True, the document contains many a formula that one is reluctant to accept, especially its evaluations of the socialist world. It says, for example, that the 'model of capitalist consumption influences, if not all the communist countries, then at least the European communist countries', and that 'this evolution will probably continue until the relation of forces changes on a world scale, that is, concretely, until a new type of socialist society is established in Western Europe.'\*\*

There is a trace here of a peculiar Europocentrism, though, obviously, if a group of the economically most developed states takes the socialist road, this will have a tremendous influence on the relation of world forces.

As we have already said, the SPD project known as the Long-Term Programme, and the OR-85 document, came under strong fire within the party, notably from the Young Socialists. 'The Long-Term Misery of the Social Democrats' was how the journal *Links* (No. 43, 1973) referred to the reformist illusions of the SPD programme document.

Josef Hindels, who is a left-wing Social Democrat, tore to shreds many provisions of the Austrian Socialist Party programme, especially the reformist methods it envisages for transforming capitalism. The neoreformists, he noted, have lost sight of the fact that despite all the labels (welfare society, consumer society, and the like), capitalism has not changed its spots. The acute class battles of recent time have shaken the West European countries and denuded the deep-going crisis gripping late capitalism. The latter cannot be improved by modernising the outer shell, as the neoreformists would have us believe. The capitalist economic system reposes on the tremendous power captured by the monopoly

\* 'Projet de société; pour le socialisme', in *Pour le Socialisme. Actes du socialisme*, Editions Stock, Paris, 1974, pp. 14, 23, 24, 43.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 28.

giants and international concerns. Things will not change much when social-democratic governments replace conservative governments, unless they alter the existing property relations (see *Die Zukunft*, Vienna, No. 12, 1974, p. 24.). And one more outspoken pronouncement:

'Do we really believe that democratic socialism can be established by democratic means? I, for one, am not so sure that we will be allowed to "introduce socialism" freely, by means of ballots. This from a leader of the left wing of the Socialist Party of Denmark (see *Ny Politik*, September 1975, Copenhagen, p. 10.)

To be sure, the mass of the workers and the trade unions are exerting pressure on the social-democratic parties, which they want to be more consistent in fighting for their long-term as well as current interests. This is making the social-democratic leaders alter their postures. Take the admissions by Brandt, Palme, and others that capitalism is in a crisis, that substantial changes are called for in the structure of society, and the like. Regrettably, these admissions are largely cancelled out by the reservation that radical change can still be achieved in the context of the traditionally social-democratic policy of 'small steps'.

Fritz Klenner, a theorist of the Socialist Party of Austria, described the usual policies of the Social Democrats as 'creeping socialism' (see *Die Zukunft*, Vienna, No. 17, 1974).

The rank and file of the social-democratic parties have voiced their discontent, and criticism of social-democratic cabinets, much more often and much more sharply than before. Though social-democratic governments have managed to win some improvements for part of the working people and in certain sectors of society, there is no sign of relief from the chief faults of the capitalist system. The Labour Party says in its programme, for example, that the distribution of wealth under the social system in Britain speaks of glaring inequalities, with two-thirds of the nation's privately owned wealth being owned by only 10 per cent of the people, while the remaining 90 per cent share only one-third of all personal wealth (see *Labour Weekly*, May 1976, Suppl., p. 22). But in the same breath, after declaring inequalities to be a glaring defect of British society, the Labour programme says that 'changes in taxation lie at the heart of measures to deal with inequality' (*ibid.*, p. 14).

This is a typically reformist approach. Instead of working for the final elimination of the source of the faults, reformists are content to try and prevent their growth. They ought to know by now, however, that in capitalist conditions this often results in the opposite: new,

higher taxes persuade firms to invoke other means of raising their profits, to shift the tax burden to the working people, and this in addition to doctoring their accounts and evading taxes.

In sum, though they sometimes admit the derelictions of capitalism and the crisis gripping the capitalist economy and politics, Social Democracy as a movement, and notably its right-wing leaders, is unable to come to any conclusive judgement. They hold that democratic socialism need not necessarily lead to a collision with and the collapse of the capitalist system. Does this mean that the right-wing Socialists leave open the question of what side they are on—the capitalist or the socialist? Our accent on the right-wingers is deliberate, for despite their claims that the reformist tradition has impregnated the movement as a whole, and that its rank and file are in a conciliatory mood, there are many signs of the reverse.

I happened to attend the 1970 Labour Conference, when Labour MPs were on the back benches. And here is what struck my eye. Many radical resolutions were moved by the trade unions and by individuals (mainly of working-class background). Prompted by Labour's election defeat, they called for a socialist opposition policy based on the Constitution of the Labour Party, which envisions securing for the 'producers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry, and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production'. Several score resolutions stressed that Labour had incurred the election defeat by its attempts to counter the economic crisis by orthodox capitalist methods, the absence of any clear distinctions between the Labour and Conservative programmes, and the Labour government's abject submission to monopoly and finance capital. Nearly all resolutions contained demands for Labour to go back to socialism, to work for nationalisation, socialist economic planning, socialist methods of production and distribution, and so on.

In sum, even though they were not resolutions calling for revolution, they referred disparagingly to the Labour government's past policies, expressed faith in the working class, readiness to fight, and an understanding of the need for a radical change of Labour's course.

But what followed? In the stage when the resolutions were collated by special officials of the Executive, the resonant flourishes of the trumpet dwindled to a squeak. Two composite resolutions emerged. One of them expressed the general wish for more equality, more public property, more shopfloor democracy,



and the like. This one was adopted. The other, too, did not sound as if it was calling anyone to the barricades. But the pressure mechanism was put to work to defeat it. The unarmed eye will not easily see why it was overturned. The snag was that it contained a few specific provisions, one of them being a call for a programme to win real economic power through the nationalisation of 280 monopoly concerns, private banks, and financial and insurance companies.

Certainly, the word socialism resonated in the speeches of the Labour leaders. More, knowing of the mood of the rank and file, the leadership took pains to show that it was abreast of the times, and produced a document entitled 'Building a Socialist Britain', with many a well-meaning passage about the need for considered, collective, progressive, and truly socialist principles. But you would be wasting your time if you looked for some clarification in it of what kind of socialism the Labour leaders had in mind or at least what they meant by the word.

At no time had the Labour movement ever associated itself with Marxist scientific socialism. This predetermined its weakness, the absence of an articulate class programme, and the looseness and uncertainty of its aims. Still, the Labour movement took its rise from the class struggle of the British workers and is, by this token, associated with the national revolutionary traditions, those of More and Owen, the Diggers and the Chartists. Where, then, is the source of the squalid notion of socialism that is imposed on Labour these days eclipsed even by the programmatic ideas of the Christian Socialists and the Fabian Society which were incorporated in the Labour Party?

The answer is obvious. The source is not in the socialist ideals and aspirations of the working classes, but in the liberal reformist notions of part of the ruling element of bourgeois society. In the nineteenth century liberalism had an edge over reformism: the workers were pitied, but no special zeal was shown to improve their condition. In the twentieth century, reformism gained the upper hand—less for altruistic reasons than for reasons pragmatic, for the working class had grown into an impressive force and had to be met halfway to avert a revolutionary explosion.

Whatever the case, the merger of liberalism and reformism could under no conditions give birth to any socialism, save perhaps the squalid version referred to above.

When the resolution calling for the expropriation of monopoly concerns was turned down by two million votes at the 1970 Blackpool Conference, a lady delegate bitterly observed that

Labour had sought power to change the world, but the world had changed Labour. She added: that is the truth, but not all the truth, for the impact of events will surely make Labour revert to the revolutionary traditions that had fed it at its source.

Some time after the Conference, Labour came to power, but had again to make room for the Tories before its term was over. And, certainly, the main reason was not that the Tory programme had been more attractive for the working people, but that voters were disillusioned with the Labour leaders' reluctance to socialise, and had given vent to their disaffection.

What has been said here of the Labour Party is also true of other social-democratic movements. For in our time the Social Democrats have little choice: either shift left, reflecting the mood of the working people, or be elbowed out by other political movements.

The main reason why the right-wing leaders could saddle the social-democratic movement with a reformist programme of 'better capitalist management' lay less with their charisma (as the Western press would have us believe), than with the predicament of the voters, who had little to choose between. Most of the working people who voted for the Social Democrats did so chiefly because they were the only left party with any chance of winning.

Not all of those who voted for the Social Democrats were pleased that they confined themselves to a policy of 'small steps', collaborating with the political forces of the bourgeoisie and not trying to uproot any of the pillars of capitalism. The left voter suffered this, for he expected to get some minor reforms in return. In other words, the rank and file Socialist, or the voter who cast his ballot for the socialist party, wanted much more from his leaders than he got, but was not yet ready to condemn them, because he, too, believed that a bird in hand was better than two in the bush.

These days, however, the stability of the Social Democrats' corps of voters is placed in question by the rising prestige and expanding social base of the communist parties.

Social-democratic and bourgeois ideologues are not inclined to see any significance in this. They are reassured by the fact that the Communists' influence is distinctly visible in only a few countries (primarily Italy and France), while in other European states, such as Finland, Belgium, Sweden, and Denmark, where Communists have seats in parliament, they are so far unable to win cabinet portfolios.

So far, this is a fair assessment. But only *so far*, because the

objective course of events is leading the masses leftward, though, perhaps, the process is not always direct and has cyclical, temporary reversals.

All the same the bourgeois camp breathed a sigh of relief over the outcome of the 1978 general elections in France, portraying it as a defeat of the Left. But Communists and Socialists won many new seats in the National Assembly, and the edge held by the Right and Centre is traceable largely to the majority system of election.

Beyond any question, the prestige of the communist parties, and their election successes, will multiply.

In fact, the social-democratic movement has not much of a choice: either go into alliance with the Communists or compete with them on the left. The interests of the working class require a dependable, programmatic alliance of communist and socialist parties to resolve the vital problems of society and transform the capitalist order. Mending the split in the working-class movement is still the task of tasks. The future of Europe, and that of mankind, depend on it.

The Communists approach the issue with a deep sense of responsibility. In my book, *The Destiny of the World. The Socialist Shape of Things to Come*, I presented facts showing that the popular (or democratic) front policy, the policy of anti-monopoly alliances, the popular unity front policy, and so on, has for many decades been the basic strategy of communist parties active in the capitalist world. There is no denying, of course, that Communists made sectarian mistakes at certain times, but this admission only speaks of their sincere and honest intentions today, and of the importance they attach to political concord with the Socialists. This was emphasised in all the key documents of the world communist movement, including that of the Berlin Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe (1976).

The Political Declaration of the Brussels Conference of Communist and Workers Parties of Western Europe (1974) calls on working-class and democratic forces, which face common problems, to step up their joint struggle. Today it is quite possible to define the aims of democratic renewal on which all forces representing the workers and the middle strata in Europe's capitalist countries could effectively collaborate. The declaration went on to say that the policy of broadly democratic and progressive alliance for peace reposes on mutual respect, and on the recognition of the equality, self-sufficiency and specificity of contributions made by each participating force. For Communists, it added, this policy is constant and fundamental, and they carry it forward to suit the

specific conditions in each country—today in furtherance of democracy and social reconstruction, and tomorrow in furtherance of socialism.

The communist parties of Europe's capitalist lands are prepared for joint action with the Socialist and Christian movements despite the existing differences. Though, as it says in the Declaration, some social-democratic leaders are champions of the capitalist system, the rank and file tend to question class collaboration. The need for deep-going political and economic change is sinking in, spurring the masses to organised action against the rule of big capital.

What are the Social Democrats doing about this? Abiding by their tradition of pragmatic action, they have no positive programme. The Socialist International has officially established that each party should deal with the matter as it sees fit. The approach is fairly simple: where they stand to gain, the Social Democrats enter into alliances, and where they think they can get by without the Communists they usually take an anti-communist stance.

At present, there are in fact two groups in the Socialist International, each with disparate ideas on various issues. Roughly, the social-democratic parties of the North of Europe, most of them ruling parties, are one group, and the socialist parties of the South of Europe, which are opposition parties, are the other. In the latter's case, conditions have shaped for a communist-socialist alliance.

As noted by Georges Marchais, General Secretary of the French Communist Party, the Socialists of France entered into an alliance with the Communists because they had no other choice. 'What is happening in France and Europe,' he said, 'shows that if the Social Democrats can do without the Communists, they do without them. ... It is essential that within the Left itself the right balance of forces between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party should prevail. We Communists do not want to dominate. We lay no claim to hegemony. We want equality of rights and responsibilities. But a balance of forces within the Left that might one day allow the Socialist Party to manage without us, to fall under the demons of the past, must not be permitted to come about' (*L'Humanité*, 19 March 1975).

Unfortunately, a stronger faction within the social-democratic movement is occupied in preventing truly equal co-operation with the Communists. True, these days the faction does not deny the chances of such co-operation some time in the future, whereas only

recently it was dead set against it and excommunicated any party member who dared whisper about it.

At the SPD Congress in Hamburg the Young Socialists had decided to join the movement against the *Berufsverbote*, and also said they supported the appeal of the West German Committee for Peace, Disarmament and Cooperation. The SPD leadership sprang into action and demanded that they disavow their decision, threatening them with expulsion.

In an interview entitled 'The Three Proofs I Want from Berlinguer', Olof Palme set the Communists these terms for co-operation: '1. Abandon the theory of proletarian dictatorship and recognise the pluralist state and bourgeois freedoms. 2. Abandon the idea of proletarian internationalism. 3. Abandon democratic centralism, which is nothing but an elitist concept of politics' (*L'Espresso*, 27 June 1976).

Bruno Kreisky, too, has 'lectured' on this score: if the Communists want to be true democrats, he said, they must jettison the idea of proletarian dictatorship and, in general, fling overboard all their articles of political faith. Then, nothing will be left of them, and they will be Social Democrats with a somewhat more revolutionary language (*Der Spiegel*, April 1977).

Even if some communist parties or some of their leaders were to submit to the dictation of Kreisky and his confederates, and to renounce the essence of their world outlook, this would alter nothing. The movement exists, is gaining strength, and the social-democratic parties will never succeed in absorbing it.

No serious co-operation can ever evolve on these terms. Despite the anti-communist fetishes of the right-wing Socialists, the leftward process as a whole is knocking the ground from under their unnatural 'social-democratic anti-communism'. The logic of events, and of the struggle against capital, will inescapably steer the left forces to unity.

Social-Democracy is still to overcome its negative view of co-operation with the communist parties at home and, more, to reverse its attitude towards existing socialism. Yet this and this alone can power a truly significant and serious turn in the social-democratic movement.

Certain signs of change are on hand. Take Mitterand's pronouncements against anti-Sovietism. While he stressed his disagreement with some principles of socialism put into effect in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, he admitted that Social Democrats had fallen prey to anti-Soviet propaganda and had often themselves initiated anti-Soviet campaigns. Socialists ought to remember, he went on to say, what they owe to the

courage, determination and dedication of the hundreds of thousands of members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and ought not forget its theoretical and practical contribution to the fight against capitalist exploitation, and thus also to the struggle for the emancipation of the working people (*Unité*, 10 February 1974).

And to sum up, here is a passage by Kalevi Sorsa: 'In Eastern Europe communist parties are at the helm, while Western Europe is essentially bourgeois, though here the influence of democratic socialism and its exponents is rising steadily. One can realistically envision a situation where Eastern Europe will be governed by Communists, and Western Europe by Socialists.' But if the Socialists are really thinking of taking over in Western Europe, he continues, they must first of all decide about their relations with the Communists. 'It will be an interesting situation,' he adds, 'for Communism will reign in an integrated Eastern Europe, and democratic socialism will reign in an integrated Western Europe. If at the time of the cold war the Social Democrats took the side of democracy against what was then called totalitarianism, they can now hardly be expected to take the side of capitalism in the economic struggle against socialism, even if it is of a different type. A *modus vivendi* will have to be found, because a rift of that kind would be intolerable for Social Democrats.'

Underlying the above is the traditional social-democratic interpretation of the political positions of both the Communists and the Socialists, and of the reasons for their dispute. Furthermore, the whole problem is wrongfully reduced to interstate relations. All the same, Sorsa gives a fairly clear exposition of the essence of the choice now facing Social Democracy, and stresses the harm that comes from its reluctance to act in concert with the Communists.

Regrettably, this understanding of things has so far spread to a very limited circle of social-democratic leaders. Most of them cling to their old postures and categorically oppose 'democratic socialism' to the existing socialism.

This brings us back to the root question posed in this chapter—the true essence of, and the real outlook for, 'democratic socialism'. The socio-political faction that has advanced the doctrine of 'democratic socialism' is class-oriented on bourgeois reformism and liberalism. This explains the incorrect evaluation of the democratic content of socialist revolution and of the experience

\* Sorsa, *Kansanvallan Kysymykset*, Tammi, Helsinki, 1974, p. 89.



of the existing socialism, on the one hand, and the renunciation of any serious, revolutionary changes in capitalist countries, on the other.

If they go on clinging to the bourgeois interpretation of democracy, the right-wing Social Democracy will never be able to appreciate the worth of the radically and decisively changed condition of the mass of the people following the October Revolution and the subsequent development of the socialist system in the Soviet Union and a number of other countries. Neither will they be able to appreciate the impact of the progress resulting from the establishment of developed socialism. They will also have a wrong idea of socialism's resources, for the communist and workers' parties that are the ruling parties in the socialist states have never yet said that the ceiling has been reached in the development of democracy. On the contrary, they have set the task of continuously expanding democracy, and of extending the social rights and the political freedoms of the individual.

Despite the conceptual poverty of the doctrine of 'democratic socialism', it does contain some hints of its end goals. And these goals do not diverge from those of the Marxist-Leninist theory of communism. They are: free development of the personality, equality (or justice, as it is styled by exponents of 'democratic socialism'), and fraternity (that is, the internationalism objected to by Palme, who counters it with the slogan of solidarity).

What the whole thing amounts to, in fact, is that counting on an automatic growth of capitalism into socialism (at most with the help of 'social engineering'), the Social Democrats have essentially renounced struggle as the means of reaching the end goals of the working-class movement.

Friedl Fürnberg, Chairman of the Communist Party of Austria, ridiculed one of the SPA leaders, Günther Nenning, for saying that 'the working-class movement cannot "overthrow" capitalism but must carry it forward and through to the end, like a doctor "at the sickbed"' (*World Marxist Review*, June 1977, p. 122).

Theoretically, even the term "democratic socialism" does not stand up to criticism, because *socialism in its true sense can be nothing but democratic*. Past experience shows, indeed, that where and when breaches of socialist democracy did occur the reasons sprang from the weakness and immaturity of socialist social relations, underdevelopment of the economic and political system of the new society, and absence of the requisite traditions. In other words, one may speak of different conditions and forms of asserting socialist principles, whereas it is wrong to raise these

differences to an absolute and artificially split the tree of socialism (either in theory or practice) into two separate branches.

At present the social-democratic movement has a great potential, and it is very likely that it will win the next round of the struggle for power in many West European countries. But if it continues on its own, and if it follows its old scheme, this will mean the loss or half-loss of another 15 or 20 precious years for the working class, the working people in general, and all mankind.

'Socialists have had approximately a century,' says James D. Forman, 'to solve the world's problems. They have less certain answers now than they had a hundred years ago' (see Forman, *Socialism, Its Theoretical Roots and Present-Day Development*, New Viewpoints, a Division of Franklin Watts, Inc., New York, 1973, p. 101).

The social-democratic leaders are now squarely faced by the job of aligning their activity with the needs of the times. They must take their place on the side of the forces of democracy and peace, and against the forces of international reaction and war; they must put an end to anti-Sovietism and anti-communism; they must recognise that the interests of labour and capital are irreconcilable; they must join hands with the liberation movement of peoples against neocolonialism.

Summing up, I can safely say that 'democratic socialism' is no realistic alternative to scientific socialism. It is doomed to extinction in the more or less distant future, while the rational ideas it happens to contain will become incorporated in the science of socialism and communism.

As for the movement behind the doctrine, it will have to make its choice—to keep in step with history and move towards a revolutionary solution of the vital problems of modern society, or to mark time with reformism and, sooner or later, be pushed to the wayside by the objective course of history.

Right-wing Socialist Carlo Maurizi says that the present conditions offer the socialist parties a historical perspective; since the capitalist world is in deep crisis, they must be ready soon to assume responsibility for governing states. And he adds that they must not be overly concerned with ideology. 'Ideology was necessary,' he goes on to explain, 'so long as they waited for power and were winning time by correcting some of the ills of capitalist society. Nowadays, however, no ideological analysis is required from them any more than the priest is required to discourse on the dogmas of faith at the deathbed. All that is required of them is to be ready' (*Critica Sociale*, Milan, January, 1975, p. 622).

I cited the above passage because it offers a clear view of the organic malaise of social-democratic thinking, the absence of any ideological, theoretical, and scientific foundation. 'Take power, then see what can be done with it'—that or nearly that is the outlook of the people who declare themselves followers of Popper and who see his concept of 'trial and error' as a next to infallible instrument for the reconstruction of society, and for giving man the requisite conditions for free development. But only the naive and innocent will believe that socialism can really be won in this fashion.

*Neither techno-idylls, nor the theory of convergence, nor the concept of 'democratic socialism' are a serious challenge to the outlook of the future offered by Marxist-Leninist theory. They are all false alternatives.*

## Part Two TRUMPED-UP DILEMMAS

In the first part of my book I endeavoured to show why doctrines aiming at preserving capitalism, be it 'renewed', 'improved', or to some extent 'socialised', have no chance of winning. But a critique of mistaken, unscientific, even anti-scientific views of the future should not confine itself to just futurological theories and political programmes. It must necessarily examine their ideological approach to the key aspects of social development.

I may be told that ideology is an organic part of any concept that professes to be an exhaustive study of the future. Quite right. Still, the attitude towards the key aspects of the social order has an independent meaning. I will say more: in many cases the theorists and political leaders of various non-Marxist currents (conservative, liberal, reformist, 'new left', pseudo-left, and so on) prefer not to construct any whole concepts, and concentrate their attention on one or two burning issues that suit their purely utilitarian ends.

To begin with, constructing a more or less whole concept of the future is no simple business. It calls for universal knowledge and a fairly powerful creative potential. It is made doubly difficult, because those who tackle it must give their picture of the future society a novel twist, less which they cannot count on success. And it is not easy to capture the imagination of the sophisticated consumer of future fantasies who has for the past several decades been plied with what was in effect one and the same ideological commodity, though in different wrappings (post-industrial society, technetronic era, tertial civilisation, and the like).

Concentrating attention on particular issues is not merely easier, but also in many respects more profitable. The subject can be chosen arbitrarily. One speaks of what appears advantageous to the social group or politico-ideological current concerned, and ignores that which goes against its grain or is beyond its comprehension. This offers a greater practical effect: when the intellectual

forces of the current are not dispersed and are applied to one narrow aim they influence public opinion much more effectively.

Lastly, the deliberate circumscription of the futurological vision has little or no effect on the prestige of the politico-ideological currents and sometimes, paradoxically, breeds exaggerated ideas about their ability to anticipate the future and chart the rational political course. In other words, the desired result is achieved with a far more economical use of resources. The reason for this strange effect is that in the ordinary consciousness a part substitutes for the whole with relative ease. Only a trained and in some ways specially developed mind will notice that it is being (deliberately or unconsciously) robbed of a full perspective. In most cases, people trustfully accept the offered 'avenue' of prognosis, giving little thought to the width of the future panorama and to how much it is distorted by this artificial, selective approach.

At the risk of running too far ahead, let me illustrate this with the following example. At present, many political currents, and the theoretical groups acting in their name, have made the ideal of freedom their chief motto. Giving it priority over all the other values, they proclaim it the alpha and omega of progress and the next to sole criterion of the virtues and faults of a social system. But since the concept of freedom is given a bourgeois class interpretation, and moreover a positively metaphysical one, all further theorising boils down to a denunciation of communism and to appeals for preventing its further spread and consolidation.

The attempt to contrast communism and freedom is certainly not novel. Indeed, it is probably the most shopworn of the arguments put to use against Marxism since the day the *Communist Manifesto* was published. But what is novel is that freedom is also contrasted to equality. For nearly two centuries the bourgeoisie brandished these slogans together, because they were equally unattainable.

To this day, the triple slogan of the 1789 Revolution—*Liberté, égalité, fraternité*—is proudly inscribed over the doors of all police stations in France.

But today, now that bourgeois ideologists are compelled to admit (at least indirectly) that equality can be secured only in a socialist and communist society, they are at pains to reduce it to an antithesis of freedom, which is alleged to be viable only in conditions of a competitive economy reposing on private property.

In other words, yielding ground to socialism, the bourgeois consciousness is making its last-ditch stand by renouncing slogans that it had proclaimed at the time of its revolutionary youth. And

not simply renouncing them, but also consigning them to anathema. As a result, its every present-day idea exists not by itself, not in its positive sense, but as a counterweight to the antithesis. Thus, it exists as a *dilemma*. As a rule, this applies to dual concepts, concepts that interact, and whose contraposition, let alone division, is contrary to the nature of things, and therefore *trumped up*.

Hence, the heading of our Part Two. It examines four trumped-up dilemmas that are at the centre of the present-day ideological struggle and whose correct solution is of cardinal significance for any study of the future.



A few decades ago the word 'revolution' was a smear word among members of the official scientific world in capitalist countries. Those who mentioned it without the due show of revulsion could come into disrepute, perhaps lose their teaching job or endure ostracism. But times have changed. The word is flaunted at scientific symposia. To be (or appear) a revolutionary is as fashionable these days as being (or appearing) a conservative a quarter of a century ago.

'Abuse of terms,' Lenin said, 'is a most common practice in politics. The name "socialist", for example, has often been appropriated by supporters of English bourgeois liberalism ("We are all socialists now," said Harcourt), by supporters of Bismarck, and by friends of Pope Leo XIII. The term "revolution" also fully lends itself to abuse, and, at a certain stage in the development of the movement, such abuse is inevitable.'\*

If all those who spoke of revolution really wanted it and did their bit to bring it about, the matter would long since have been settled. Unfortunately, gasbags of the pseudo-left or the right often put on the revolutionary mantle to disguise the essence of their anarchist or conservative programme and, at once, win it favour with the masses. Intellectualists discoursing on the theme of revolution aren't much better. But there is also a fairly numerous group of theorists who are sincerely convinced (and have convinced their admirers) that they have found novel avenues for the revolutionary improvement of the world, though they are, at best, merely repeating banal verities long since discovered and tested in practice by Marxists-Leninists or, at worst, are dangerously mistaken and likely to bring the revolutionary and democratic movement to grief.

\* V. I. Lenin, 'Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 127.

Let me cite a few casually picked examples in the context of the futurist problem.

The leading modern concepts of revolution opposed to the Marxist-Leninist theory have been quite exhaustively studied and criticised in Soviet literature. Among others, see Y. A. Krasin, *Revolutsiyei ustasheniye* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1975) which, as its sub-title says, is a critical essay on bourgeois concepts of social revolution.

To begin with, a cursory look at what may be described as the most 'ultra-revolutionary' theory of revolution—that of French sociologist Jacques Ellul. We are justified in giving it the above description by the passion Ellul displays when discussing the need for extreme radical change, and by the deadly sarcasm he invokes to condemn structures that have outlived their time. As Ellul sees it, this applies first of all to the state and to technology. Both are bad. He denounces the state in all its forms and manifestations. Referring to Proudhon, who said any government is counter-revolutionary if only because it is a government, and to Bakunin, who said establishing a universal collective dictatorship is itself enough to kill the revolution, Ellul declares that these days the class struggle is in train not within society, but between society, on the one hand, and the state, on the other.\* The problem of class relations, therefore, has lost meaning. The upper and lower classes have joined hands to wrestle for their interests with the state, that Leviathan which cows people with arrests, tribunals, and the like (*op. cit.*, pp. 194-5).

This anarchist howl is so far removed from any common-sense, let alone scientific, view of social phenomena that it is hardly worth the effort to deny it. It is equally needless to deny Ellul's rejection of the concept of a revolutionary state because, as he contends, the moment a revolution is performed the state at once sheds its revolutionary character and becomes a counter-revolutionary institution. The author does not see revolution as a social overturn. For him it is nothing but an overnight act of violence.

He ridicules the "revolution" of the Latin Quarter, as he describes the mighty Paris students' and workers' action in May 1968. It ignited itself night after night, he says, only to extinguish itself sagely at dawn. The revolutionaries slept through the day, and went out of town on weekends. One might gather from this that the most essential criterion of revolution is when the revolutionaries slept, at night or during day. What next?

Along with the state, Ellul condemns technical progress. In so

\* Ellul, *Autopsie de la Révolution*, Calman-Lévy, Paris, 1969, p. 317.

doing, he piles in one heap the positive aspects of technology and its refuse, deriving chiefly from the methods of using technology in capitalist conditions. The principle of *concrete transition*, the precondition for any scientific analysis (and here the need to examine the undesirable consequences of the scientific-technical revolution from the angle of whether technology is used rightly or wrongly in the setting of the social system in question), is wholly out of Ellul's reach. Since his method is to ignore contradictions and the struggle of classes within society, all phenomena are treated simplistically: the state of any shape, dimension or form is a peril to one and all, and so is technology, and so on.

What, then, is the 'revolutionary' cure that Ellul offers society, which, as he puts it, has obviously come to an impasse? He calls it 'the necessary revolution', with the word 'necessary' conceived not as a historical inevitability but as a moral imperative. Revolution, says Ellul (and here he is quite right), is needed by all those in the Third World who are dying of hunger, who suffer from racial discrimination, and those who are made to bear arms against their will, to shoot, to kill, and so on.

True, it turns out that the 'necessary revolution' is not all that necessary, for Ellul goes on to say that to preserve its privileges and profits the imperialist system can adapt itself to the facts and dampen the possible conflicts, and reduce tensions, by modernising society. Since capitalism has proved able to raise the standard of living in the developed states, he says, it is also able, if it so wishes, to solve the problems of the Third World. If so, we are tempted to ask, why the 'necessity' of revolution?

Since the 'necessary revolution' is called upon to wipe out the state and what Ellul calls the 'technical society' (he stresses that he is not against technology as such, but against the technicalisation of society), it connotes lower efficiency in all domains (output, productivity, adaptation, integration, etc), reducing individual well-being, folding great collective projects, and gradually effacing mass culture. And Ellul adds: 'One mustn't have any illusions about it, for if one isn't prepared to pay the price ... one is also unprepared for a revolution, the only kind of revolution necessary today' (*op. cit.*, p. 329).

In other words, Ellul's revolutionary charge is barely enough to produce the wretched and utopian ideas of returning to the 'golden age' by half-returning to the stone age.

This is implied in the following particulars. As Ellul sees it, a genuine revolution, if it is to counter 'the most advanced form of destruction of man', can materialise only in the Occident (*op. cit.*

p. 311). He holds that it will not take place in the Third World because 'there is no hope of seeing the mobs of Asians and Africans mobilise themselves for the achievement of objectives which they obviously cannot understand'. And he adds: 'The revolution will be made in the Occident or it won't be made at all' (*op. cit.*, p. 313).

Why, indeed, have a 'necessary revolution' in the Third World if it does not have enough technology and if 'destruction of man' there has not reached its 'most advanced form'?

One is taken aback by the arrogance of the professor whom the West holds in high regard as a humanist. How off-handedly he scorns the people in the developing countries, denying them, of all things, the ability to apprehend the necessity for changing the conditions of their existence by revolutionary means. This is more than enough, despite the many freedom slogans scattered in Ellul's 'autopsy of revolution', to put the man in the reactionary rather than the liberal camp.

But what is probably a far more important point is that the concept of 'necessary revolution' is no revolutionary concept. Because, first of all, a revolution is in all circumstances an act associated with progress. Consequently, no act directed to regression can in any circumstances be seen as an act of revolution. Even if we accepted Ellul's claim that man's golden age refers to the pre-technical or moderately technical civilisation, and that the state deserves to be wiped out (though it remains a mystery what will take its place and how public order will be maintained), I repeat, even in that case the 'necessary revolution' is no more than a counter-revolution.

Now, the revolutionary programme of the prominent U.S. professor, Erich Fromm. The point of departure for his rebellious views is the same rejection of the universal technicalisation of society as Jacques Ellul's. Referring to Lewis Mumford's *The Myth of the Machine* (Harcourt, Brace, N.Y., 1966), Fromm discusses the appalling outlook facing mankind when society turns into a variety of megamachine and people will be paltry and wordless pawns of this monster.

Fromm notes two principles governing the nature of the 'technological society' unacceptable from the point of view of humanism. First, the principle that anything which becomes technically attainable is inevitably put into practice irrespective of its usefulness. Second, the principle of the maximum efficiency and productivity, which become the criterion in any field of activity, irrespective of their being needed.

Upon demonstrating the various faults of the 'technological

society', and paying no heed to whether they derive from technology or from the manner in which it is used in capitalist society, Fromm suggests his own remedy—a 'non-violent revolution'. The reason in its favour is that, on the one hand, in a country like the United States of America, run by skilled managers, any violent overturn may disrupt the economy, and that, on the other, it may cause international tensions, not short of nuclear war.

Since revolutionary violence is ruled out as a possible method of humanising 'post-industrial society', Fromm holds, the job is to change the public consciousness until one day, when most electors support the movement for 'humanistic management', the government they choose will, conscious of the lack of promise of the 'technological society', undertake to lead the country out of the impasse.\*

To hasten this change, Fromm suggests instituting a national council, the Voice of American Consciousness, with similar councils locally. The national council, as conceived by Fromm, should be neither elected nor appointed. It should consist of the 'most outstanding and humane Americans' numbering fifty. Lower down go 'clubs' (of 100 to 200 members) and then smaller groups that should convene once a week to exchange information, discuss developments, and so on. Fromm continuously reminds the reader that they must have nothing in common with a political party, and that ideological rhetoric or ambiguous speech should be banned at club discussions. How this is to be achieved, however, remains unclear.

A cursory look at Fromm's scheme is enough to revive memories of analogous constructions by Saint-Simon, Fourier, and other utopians of by-gone days. But that Fromm's concept is utopian, since the variety of masonic lodges he wants to entrust with reviving society are quite inevitably bound to degenerate into talking shops, isn't its only trouble. It's a reactionary utopia. Up in arms against excessive technicalisation and against dehumanisation, against people turning into robots, Fromm, like Ellul, confuses the culprit of negative developments, that is, the social system of capitalism, with what he terms an irrational and fatal tendency that he says is not dependent on the ups and downs of the class struggle.

By condemning the state in general, both Fromm and Ellul aim their doubts less at the bourgeois state (since it exists) and more at

\* Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope. Toward a Humanized Technology*, Harper & Row, New York, 1968.

the coming state, that is, the socialist state (since they deny it the right to appear). But this would be a roadblock to any real, effective change. If people in the capitalist countries were to follow the advice of the two 'humanists', they would come to sad times: 'detechicalisation' coupled with a break-up of social ties, that is, a descent to the primitive condition of the cave man.

Next, a glance at the revolutionary alteration of U.S. society as conceived by Charles Reich, professor of law at Yale University, author of *The Greening of America* and a prominent member of the New Left. He says: 'There is a revolution coming. It will not be like revolutions of the past. It will not require violence to succeed, and it cannot be successfully resisted by violence. It is now spreading with amazing rapidity. ...It promises a higher reason, a more human community, and a new and liberated individual.'\*

Well and good. But what, for Reich, is the essence of this imminent revolution? It is, of all things, 'the revolution of the new generation. Their protest and rebellion, their culture, clothes, music, drugs, ways of thought, and liberated life-style'. No, says Reich, these things are not a passing fad or a form of dissent and refusal. He amplifies: 'It must be understood in light of the betrayal and loss of the American dream, the rise of the Corporate State of the 1960's and the way in which that State dominates, exploits, and ultimately destroys both nature and man' (*op. cit.*, p. 4).

It is only fair to mention that Reich ranks among the more honest and unbending critics of the capitalist system, though the conclusions he draws from what he sees are not always right. But whatever the case, he exposes the corruption and hypocrisy of American society, the contrast between rich and poor, the contempt for the social and cultural interests of the working people, the law-making of private power, the uncontrolled technology and the destruction of the environment, the decline of democratic principles and liberty, the gradual reduction of the nation into a feudal type of managerial hierarchy, with a small elite and a great mass of the disenfranchised, and absence of community, as a result of which 'America is one vast, terrifying anti-community' (*op. cit.*, pp. 6-8). His is a sober view, the view of someone who is sincerely disturbed by the future of his country and nation, and is trying to find a way out of the crisis into which society has been driven by the capitalist order.

But what is Reich's remedy? He concentrates on the role of

\* Reich, *The Greening of America*, Random House, New York, 1970, p. 4.



consciousness. As he sees it, there is consciousness of three types in modern America. Consciousness I is the traditional outlook of the American middle class. Consciousness II expresses society's striving for organisation. The bearer of Consciousness III is the new generation. Reich stresses that this classification is conditional and that none of the three types of consciousness are found in pure form. Still, he builds his concept of revolution on them. He expects Consciousness III gradually to encompass new social groups, to spread to other generations, 'revolutionizing the structure of our society'. In the end, he holds, it will accomplish revolution, and this not 'by direct political means, but by changing culture and the quality of individual lives, which in turn change politics and, ultimately, structure' (*op. cit.*, p. 19).

In all fairness, Reich's evaluation of the potency of the consciousness as a material force that will erode the old and establish a new social order, is fairly moderate. The revolutionary mission that Consciousness III must accomplish is, therefore, to be facilitated by the objective events that are dragging the rotten old system to self-destruction. What he calls the Corporate State, which has put man under its boot and is dehumanising the essence of relations between people, has, in effect, embarked on this self-destruction and, as the author says, 'is now generating forces that will accomplish what no revolutionaries could accomplish by themselves. And there is nothing the State can do, by repression or power, to prevent these forces from bringing it down' (*op. cit.*, p. 190).

This means that rather than undermine and destroy the unjust social order, Consciousness III is expected to fill the vacuum that appears in its place as it fades into non-existence under the impact of its own contradictions.

That, naturally, eases the job for Consciousness III. But what is Consciousness III? We learn that it consists of a set of moral commandments: do not force yourself, be honest with yourself; do not judge others, and be honest with others; do not use others as a means, and so on. These commandments, it is easy to see, go no further than those of the Bible, which were converted into moral imperatives by Immanuel Kant. Reich's Consciousness III, pure as snow and innocent as a newborn babe, renounces the goals of status, a position in the hierarchy, security, money, possessions, power, respect, and honour. All these things, says Reich, are not merely wrong, they are unreal (*op. cit.*, p. 239).

Propagating revolution through consciousness, which is to destroy the Corporate State from within, without violence, without seizure of power, even without overthrow of any ruling group (it isn't

at all clear what the results of this revolution are to be), Reich is aware that his concept is, in effect, a call to renounce any and all struggle and to concentrate on the propagation of moral self-improvement. To counter criticism that his concept is playing into the hands of the Establishment, the American professor offers two arguments: first, that force against the technically strong and highly-organised state cannot be effective, for it would be fighting the enemy on his own ground, and, second, that Marx's conclusions applied to the nineteenth century and are irrelevant for the United States today. For Marx, Reich says, the economic task was at the centre of the struggle to improve the condition of the working class. But modern industrial society, he argues, is able to meet the material needs of all, at least in due course. Hence the moral task, the fight for humanity, has moved to the foreground. And that is a task which no direct embroilments between classes will accomplish, for the solution lies in the domain of the consciousness.

This notion, like the others we have examined here, reposes on a primitive distortion of the Marxist-Leninist teaching. Marxism has never reduced the task of the revolutionary reconstruction of society to only the material factor. Ever since *The Communist Manifesto* (and the *Manifesto* dates to 1848), the goal of liberating labour and liberating the individual has stood squarely at the centre of the revolutionary teaching of the working class.

Incorrect, too, is the claim that 'modern industrial society' (that is, capitalist society), even one so rich as that of the United States, is able, even if some time later, to fully satisfy the needs of the working people. Whatever the level of satisfying the needs of various social groups may be, in capitalist conditions there will always remain the problem of inequality. Besides, if capitalism is, indeed, able to furnish a relatively high standard of living in a few richer countries, this is largely the result of having plundered a vast majority of mankind that neocolonialism subjects to backwardness, poverty, and semi-starvation. Yet Reich, when speaking of American society, gives to understand that in the final analysis his concept of revolution through consciousness is of universal relevance.

In short, though Reich does not want to be regarded an anti-Marxist and, on the contrary, assumes that he has succeeded in bringing Marxist thought in step with the times, his construction reposes on an extremely simplified interpretation of the Marxist theory of revolution. 'Almost all New Left theorists, from Marcuse on down,' Reich writes, 'agree that no revolution is possible in the

United States at the present time.' And he adds his own opinion: 'No political revolution is possible in the United States right now, but no such revolution is needed' (*op. cit.*, pp. 304, 305). That, I daresay, is the quintessence of the professor's concept, which puts it in one heap with a number of others. Given all the good intentions of the author, his revolutionary current, alas, has a counter-revolutionary charge.

Indeed, Reich pins nearly all his hopes of eliminating the faults of capitalism on a small group of young people from the upper strata of American society, who, he hopes, will turn their backs on the legacy of their forebears, will foster what are in substance Christian sentiments, and then reconstruct modern society by what would in effect be missionary sermons. Puerile hopes dashed by the developments of recent years. Reich will still have to rethink his faith in Consciousness III, because virtually before our eyes the intellectual youth that inspired his theory of non-violent revolution has disintegrated. Some have happily joined the Establishment. Others have just as happily hoisted the banner of hippiedom and sank to the bottom to become the lumpenproletariat of today that feeds on the rests off the table of the 'post-industrial society'.

Reich's concept is a visual exposition of one of the chief flaws of the bourgeois system of thought: lacking fundamental knowledge of the general laws governing social development, some Western theorists tend to seize on the first signs of some new phenomenon and to load it with history-making significance, and, also, to claim the laurel wreath of discoverer.

History is no indiscriminately massed agglomeration of phenomena different in type, structure and form. It has a system determined by a certain order and succession of events. Nothing but its lack of a feeling of history can explain why the New Left, which sees no revolutionary situation in the United States today, is reluctant to accept that such a situation may arise in the future, much less the immediate future.

And since it rules out a political revolution, it has nothing left to hope for but a moral overturn. But the idea of a moral overturn is nursed not only by a man like Reich, who has earned the reputation of an extreme radical, but also by wholly respectable American professors, such, say, as Burrhus Skinner, whom the American Psychological Association has declared the greatest psychologist since Freud.

Behaviourist Skinner holds that the source of all the evils of modern society is in man himself. To uproot them in society, they must first be extirpated from the human consciousness. How?

History, Skinner says, knows of many ways of resolving the question of behaviour. Plato in his *Republic* suggests a political solution, Augustinus in his *The City of God* a religious solution, Thomas More and Francis Bacon a moral and juridical solution, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his followers an organically moral solution. As he sees it, the nineteenth century was associated with economic projects, and the twentieth with behavioural ones.

What does Skinner suggest? A scheme under which people would be rewarded for good behaviour. Punishment, as he sees it, cannot help, while sensible and skilful encouragement will gradually improve human nature and make it impervious to negative influences.

The evolution of culture, Skinner holds, is a self-governed process, so the task of the *Kulturträger* is to intensify the factors that set in motion the remote consequences of behaviour (See Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, Bantam Book, New York, 1972).

It is a short step from ideas of this sort to the idea of Jesus-revolution propagated in recent years by ideologists close to the Catholic Church or those eager to win followers among religionists. According to this updated version of the biblical commandments, the error of the so-called classical revolutions was that they were directed against governments, whereas the evil is rooted in human nature, and what should be combatted is not environmental pollution but soul pollution.

This idea, as formulated in a newspaper put out by Jesus-revolutionists, is cited by French sociologist Jean Duchesne in his book, *Jesus Revolution Made in U.S.A.* (Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1972).

Far be it from me to deny the importance of restructuring the human consciousness, of ridding it of the 'demons of evil' and fostering the inherent good. It is to Skinner's credit that he believes such restructuring possible, and this by encouraging the good in human nature rather than by physical or biological coercion.

But, honestly, it is ingenuously innocent to believe that the revolution of the consciousness should precede social progress and serve as the chief mover of the revolutionary reconstruction of the entire system of social relations. History has seen a host of moralists who devised ethical codes *par excellence*. None of them succeeded in transforming human nature. In vain, too, were the expectations of the utopians that the ground for a society of justice would be laid by universal education. And the Christian Church had nearly two thousand years at its disposal to make the Saviour's injunction, 'love thy neighbour', a universal standard of behaviour,

Even its pontiffs will not deny that both their 'flock' and its 'shepherds' are nowhere close to this ideal.

To place 'revolution of the consciousness' at the centre of social reconstruction is, roughly, like putting the cart before the horse. Social revolution, and social revolution alone, can, by radically altering the conditions of life, give impulse to a gradual change of the spirit, and mind you, the process is of extraordinary complexity, and very slow.

The 'culture builders' may retort, of course, that no social overturn ever occurs without the complicity of the consciousness, the understanding of the need for replacing the existing order of things, a more or less clear definition of the aims of the struggle. Absolutely right. That function is performed by thinker-revolutionaries and the party they form of the most advanced members of the revolutionary class. But the dialectics of the relation of revolutionary consciousness to revolutionary action in no way requires any radical transformation of the mass psychology as a preliminary condition for a social overturn. As Marx showed, being determines consciousness, not *vice versa*.

I could cite many other concepts of revolution devised in the West over the recent decades (à la Marcuse or Mumford or Gortz). But that is hardly necessary, for the examples I have already given are quite enough to draw general conclusions.

On second thought, it may be useful to mention the various 'systems theories' that have mushroomed in the recent period. According to British Marxist Frank Chase, their main purpose is to back up the conception of capitalism as a 'self-regulating system or hierarchy of systems' that secure a stable state of society (see *Marxism Today*, Vol. 19, No. 3, London, p. 75).

The first general conclusion to be drawn from the aforesaid is that revolutionary theorising upon the groundwork of 'technical idyllism' or 'technical criticism' is barren or worse than barren. The modern crusaders against the old order seem to have everything in their toolbox—exposure of the faults and vices and injustices of bourgeois society, and impassioned praise of freedom, and profound studies of the causes of social phenomena, and valuable ideas about various details of the blueprint of the ideal future. But given all that, they still fail to evoke a mass response. They leave society indifferent if, of course, we write off their short-lived popularity among the university elite, an intellectual popularity that bursts afire overnight and burns itself out just as swiftly.

How to explain why such, in a certain sense outstanding, products of the intellect have such short lives and generate

practically no visible motion in society? This is evidently due to the fallacy of their general premise, their failure to reflect the needs of the times, their inaccurate evaluation of current processes, and the incorrect orientation they give the social forces.

By orientation I do not mean any erroneous idea of the direction of progress. Many times in history social movements espoused mistaken theories of revolution (they were either premature or belated), and people performed feats of extraordinary valour under their banner only to lay down their lives, but leaving a radiant trace in the chronicles of the struggle for right and justice. The concepts that we have just discussed, however, cannot inspire anything, not even a 'doomed revolution', in anyone. And the reason for this unnatural barrenness of thought is that, though these concepts profess to be revolutionary and are clad in revolutionary rhetoric, *they are in substance counter-revolutionary and amount to nothing but a refined advocacy of the most banal of reformisms.*

As Lenin said: 'Instead of waging an open, principled and direct struggle against all the fundamental tenets of socialism in defence of the absolute inviolability of private property and freedom of competition, the bourgeoisie of Europe and America, as represented by their ideologists and political leaders, are coming out increasingly in defence of so-called social reforms as opposed to the idea of social revolution. Not liberalism versus socialism, but reformism versus socialist revolution—is the formula of the modern, "advanced" educated bourgeoisie.'\*

If we abstract ourselves from the many, even though substantial, distinctions between these various modernistic concepts of revolution, and try to synthesise their main idea, it will present itself in one of two modifications: no social revolution is necessary because its tasks can be fulfilled by either the scientific-technical revolution or a revolution in ethics. In both cases the idea is to substitute a set of rationalistic actions performed on the initiative of the creative elite (technocrats, managers, 'culture builders', and the like) for the reconstruction of society.

This is nothing if not reformism. And it stands not for reforms that are either to prepare or to supplement a revolutionary overturn, but reforms that are to replace it, to make it redundant.

Historian Eugen Weber maintains that now 'consumer society has consumed the revolution'. Thereupon he counsels would-be revolutionaries 'to look away from their anachronistic models',

\* V. I. Lenin, 'Reformism in the Russian Social-Democratic Movement', *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 229.



which, he adds, 'they have abandoned in practice anyway'. He urges them to invent 'a revolutionary project appropriate to the contemporary context'. As Weber sees it, such a project must 'unlock the gate that leads from the familiar to the unexpected, release history to move ahead to a new and unpredictable stage'. Then he concludes: 'But as long as our notions of historical change continue to turn on terms as imprecise as revolution and counterrevolution, they remain blocked, and focused on problems already left behind' ('Revolution? Counterrevolution? What Revolution?', in *Journal of Contemporary History*, London, No. 2, 1974, pp. 45, 46, 47).

Weber would have done well to look back to Chile, where the meaning of the terms revolution and counter-revolution manifested itself with the utmost precision. He would do well to focus on the distribution of power and wealth in the United States. For these are problems that are in no way already left behind, despite naming American society a consumer society. Like many other theorists of the liberal school, Weber prefers to declare revolution anachronistic, on the one hand, and to put it off until 'a new and unpredictable stage', on the other.

The very same idea is being propagated, not covertly or bashfully but with conviction and a certain bravado, by the right-wing Social Democrats. Enough has been said about them in the previous chapter. Let us, therefore, confine ourselves to just a cursory examination of that part of the social-democratic doctrine that deals with reform and revolution.

The arguments of the theorists of 'democratic socialism' seem to pick up where Fromm, Marcuse and other designers of 'creeping revolution' have left off. To begin with, they say that social revolution is impossible, because there is no one to carry it out. This thesis is buttressed by various statistics showing that the working class in the industrialised capitalist countries has never had it so good and has to the last man moved up the social ladder to what was once called the workers' aristocracy, blending thereby with the middle classes. Greater credibility is imparted by results of sociological studies showing that workers are wholly content with their lot and thus belong to the conservative segment of modern capitalist society. Even businessmen want some change, while the workers, we are led to believe, and this evidently includes unemployed workers, want none.

Discouraging in this vein, British sociologist Michael Mann writes that 'perhaps revolutions in the Marxist sense never occur'. He adds: 'It seems rather unlikely that the proletariat carries in itself the power to be a class for itself

(Mann, *Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class*, MacMillan, London, 1973, p. 73). A clear example of the limitations of bourgeois thinking, of inability to think historically: the working class became a class for itself a long time ago, when it acquired its own philosophy and political theory—Marxism.

The role of the working class has been examined at length by many Soviet authors. All we need say here is that the disparagers of the proletariat's revolutionary mission indulge in wishful thinking. And that is best illustrated by the powerful political actions of the workers that shake the pillars of capitalism, such as the one in Paris in the spring of 1968.

The second fundamental argument of the reformists: revolution is impermissible for society pays too high a price for it. Thereupon, a scrupulous account that includes interruption of development, allegedly inevitable loss of human life, economic dislocation, collapse of morality, disruption of international order, general bestiality, and so on. And not a word about the course of the revolution being largely determined by the reaction to it of the exploiting classes at home and abroad, about the civil war and foreign intervention they provoked being the main cause of the difficulties experienced in revolutionary Russia, and about the specific conditions of the first socialist revolution not necessarily having to repeat themselves in our time when the balance of world forces has changed so radically.

Finally, the deprecators of revolution, who so carefully added up the social 'losses' associated with it (including those for which it is not to blame), do not for some reason balance them up with the 'profits' of revolution. Outdated relations of production, which act as a brake on the free and steady development of the productive forces, set a drastic limit on the capacity of society, inflicting tremendous damage. Look back and see what suffering and grief, and what material losses the capitalist system inflicted on people with such of its attributes as merciless exploitation, crises of production, and colonialism. Just the wars and war preparations of the twentieth century have cost mankind scores of millions of lives and some 4,000,000,000,000 dollars.

To be sure, reformists do not altogether deny the positive effects of revolutionary change. But they cavalierly shift the profit from revolution's account to that of reform. Their third and principal argument is this: social revolution is no longer necessary because today it can be replaced by a series of reforms.

Leading social-democratic theorists are trying to prove that the experience of the social-democratic parties espousing the 'democratic socialism' doctrine

has refuted the need for revolutionary change and confirmed the reformist theories of the gradual, phased 'growth' of capitalism into socialism (see *Demokratisk Sosialistisk Perspektiv*, Tiden Norsk Forlag, Gjøvik, 1976).

Social-democratic theorists maintain, too, that the strategy of reform is the only one that conforms with the 'socio-cultural characteristics' of the working class. The workers, they claim, have learned the futility of 'violent revolution' from their own experience, and have lost faith in the prospect of ending or substantially restricting plutocratic rule at one stroke in order to convert modern society to the principles of justice.

Reformism as a current of the working-class movement is more than a hundred years old. It has had time enough to stockpile a rich arsenal of arguments. But though these hundred years have been fruitful for mankind in all respects, and though they have seen far-reaching change in social life, in international relations, and in science and technology, the arguments for reformism can hardly be said to have changed quality. As twenty and as fifty years ago, the principal argument is that the quantity of reforms grows into a new quality of society. Right-wing theorist of the Socialist Party of Austria, Fritz Klenner, writes: 'The Marxist-Leninist formula of "democratic socialism equals reformism stabilising the bourgeois system" must be countered with the formula: "permanent democratic reforms of economy and society lead cumulatively to changes in the social system in the sense of a humane socialism"'.\*

But there is one snag: Social Democrats have been in power in a number of West European countries for quite some time, and their leaders owe us an explanation why in so considerable a time, given a certain improvement in the condition of the working people, no solution has been found to such cardinal social problems as elimination of class inequality, transfer of power to the people, and decisive workers' participation in running production?

No convincing explanation has so far been given. But since an explanation is asked for, and this more and more insistently, the right-wing leaders have put into circulation the conception of 'system-changing reforms'.

Declaring his wish to find a 'third way', an alternative to both capitalism and communism, Willy Brandt called on his colleagues to discuss the question of 'reformism or revolution, system-changing or system-improving reforms' (see Brandt, Kreisky, Palme, *Briefe und Gespräche...*, p. 20).

What does this theoretical novelty speak of? First of all, it is an admission, in effect, that everything the Social Democrats have

\* Klenner, *Sozialismus in der Sackgasse? Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Umbruch*, Europa-Verlag, Vienna, 1974, p. 309.

been doing so far went the way of improving the capitalist system in a vain attempt to make it so good that the working class should not want it to be replaced.

And this second point. Though the 'system-changing reforms' idea appears to draw a line through everything the Social Democrats have been doing so far and calls for a new approach, it really remains within the old reformist framework.

To buttress this point, let me cite Helmut Schmidt of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. He extols systematic and step-by-step alteration of separate laws and regulations, tackling separate problems, and bringing about change piece by piece through concrete reforms, that is, as he puts it, through what Karl Popper calls 'piecemeal social engineering'. And Schmidt adds that this connotes 'rejection of the popular distinction between "system-stabilising" and "system-changing" reforms, for any reform is by definition a change of the existing state of affairs, and every social reform changes the society concerned and hence its "system"' (see *Kritischer Rationalismus und Sozialdemokratie*, Verlag J. H. W. Dietz, Berlin-Bonn-Bad Godesberg, 1975, pp. VII, VIII).

I may be asked why I object. Is it objectionable if the quality of the system is changed by reform? Is it essential that society should be changed solely by revolutionary means? Wouldn't that imply that the means become an aim in themselves, and isn't that precisely what the Social Democrats accuse the Communists of, saying that they cling like dogmatists to revolutionary slogans that suited the times of the French Revolution, the times of the Paris Commune, the Russia of 1917, but are no longer suitable for the latter half of the twentieth century?

Why, ask the Social Democrats, do the Communists want revolutions and nothing but revolutions, which inevitably cause great loss of life, bring about civil wars and destruction, and impair the state of the productive forces? And they reply: Because the Communists do not understand the implications of the change brought about by the scientific-technical revolution and the attendant progress of capitalist societies, and because they are in the grip of outdated ideas about the potentialities of progress in present conditions.

Here is a typical example of this sort of talk: 'Revolutionaries, like other individuals, are also prisoners of the past—of their own revolution,' says political scientist Gabriel Fischer. Those who participated in the October Revolution and in the Civil War in Russia, he says, saw the way they achieved their revolutionary aims as the best and the most efficient, and he amplifies: 'Such an attitude may develop ... into the acceptance and assertion of a rigid theoretical model, virtually compulsory for all nations and countries seeking a socialist revolution, regardless of their level of development or of their national

characteristics and traditions' *International Journal*, Toronto, Summer 1973, pp. 446-7).

And he says this in the teeth of the fact that practically all the countries that took the socialist road after the Second World War did not follow the model of the October Revolution, and that the socialist revolutions there were of an entirely different nature precisely because they took the maximum account of time and place.

No, we Communists reject reformism because no reform, in whatever circumstances, is able to resolve the problems that are tackled by the revolution. The whole thing depends on what aims are set: if you merely want to improve the existing system, reforms will do. But if you want radical change, then you must prepare for and carry out revolution. There is no third way.

Supporters of modern reformism—many of them highly-knowledgeable and not lacking a brilliant mind—display astonishing blindness when they talk of the relation of revolution to reform, and especially when they discuss the teaching of Marx and Lenin on a negative plane. One gets the impression that they are either unacquainted with it or that they have not been able to understand it. So much so that one tends to deny them the benefit of the doubt about their having honestly misunderstood it. One begins to think that they are playing a game to confuse their audience in the interests of the prevailing social order.

To begin with, this artificial contrapositioning of revolution and reform! It is artificial because the two notions or, more precisely, the real forms of social development they connote, *cannot* substitute one for the other. No reform can become a revolution, and this simply because it is mere reform. A reform that would bring about a revolutionary change of power and a change of property relations would thereby also change its own name. Suppose we hypothetically assume that one day the King of Sweden or the Queen of England issue an edict that henceforth their countries shall be governed by the working class, and that the means of production shall henceforth be public property. We could then say that a reform brought about a revolution. But in that case the edict itself would be revolutionary. And that is the heart of the matter.

Revolution is:

- a) transfer of power from one class to another class, and
- b) a change of the form of property that either accompanies such transfer or is its subsequent aim.

And a socialist revolution is transfer of power from the capitalist class to the working class and other working people, and change of

the basic means of production from private property to property of all society.

Where these two conditions are met there is revolution, and where they are not there can only be reform, no matter what exuberant and radical rhetoric is spouted on this score. In short, the question does not concern *the way in which* transfer of power and change of the form of property occur. And that is what reformists do not, or pretend they do not, understand. As they see it, revolution is embodied in inescapable violence, decapitation of royalty, capture of the Bastille, salvo of the *Aurora*, storming of the Winter Palace, and the like. They have no other conception of revolution.

British sociologist Michael Mann argues against the possibility of a revolutionary coup d'état 'in the name of the proletariat' and refers to the replacement of landowners by capitalists in countries like Britain or Japan, which was conceived by contemporaries as 'a relatively peaceful process of class assimilation' (Mann, *op. cit.*, p. 73). When he says that in the modern West the major possibilities seem to be either a comparable process of assimilation or a coup d'état, he does not seem to notice that he is talking of a revolutionary overturn that always lasts a whole historical era and is never comparable to a mere coup d'état.

True, nothing is easier than to refute the Marxist theory of revolution after distorting it out of all proportion.

But today the difference between an uprising as a form of revolutionary overturn, and revolution *per se* as a radical transformation of the social pattern, a passage from one socio-economic system to another, is quite clear. This passage is necessarily performed by force where the revolutionary class and its allies are resisted by the reactionary class, and resisted by force. It may also be a peaceful passage where the relation of forces is so strongly in favour of the revolutionary classes that the outgoing social strata, those which the revolution strips of their privileges and power, are unable to resort to force, to take up arms, and are compelled to reconcile themselves to the inevitability of change.

Marxism-Leninism not only admits the possibility of, but also regards as preferable, a peaceful transfer of power to the working class, and therefore also the possibility of carrying out revolutionary reconstruction by non-violent means—any means made available by the historical process, be it universal suffrage, the legislative will of parliament, or a general strike—so long as they lead to the formation of a revolutionary government and thereby set in motion a social revolution.

When they began the October Revolution, the workers of Russia and their vanguard, the Communist Party, reckoned that it would develop peacefully. Could one, indeed, think that workers and



other working people wishing to take control of the social wealth their labour created had any stake in dislocation, civil war, or anything like that. Violence was imposed on them by the counter-revolution, and is always so imposed as the experience of Chile has amply demonstrated.

Given any of the two means of taking power, the peaceful and the violent, the act itself is not conceived by Marxists-Leninists as the start of an 'automatic' passage to socialism and communism. It is only the start of a wide-ranging and long effort leading to the transformation of all social relations. And, mind you, this effort has nothing in common with any artificial implantation of an abstract ideal (as Social Democrats would have us believe). It is a historical action strictly in keeping with the laws of social development, for if it were not, failure of all proletarian revolutions would have been inevitable.

Reform, on the other hand, is action aimed at improving and perfecting some specific part of the social mechanism without impinging on its basic principles. Revolution, too, cannot dispense with reforms. On capturing power, the victorious class achieves its various goals by means of a series of reforms, some of which take decades to accomplish. Doubly so in the case of socialist revolution, which is not confined to merely building socialism, and sets itself the far more long-term and difficult task of building communism.

This, understandably, can be done only by reforms. They are carried out as conditions ripen for the fulfilment of the various major tasks. Such reforms may concern the economy, politics, or the social structure. They help to eradicate undesirable survivals of the past, to ascend the next rung of social progress, and sometimes to rectify errors committed due to insufficiently accurate definition of tasks in the preceding stages of building socialism. In sum, in the new society reforms are an ally of the revolution, and a *modus operandi* for the revolutionary class that has come to power.

In an article tendenciously entitled, 'No Revolution in the Revolution', Professor Gabriel Fischer (U.S.A.) maintains that the situation in countries of the socialist system may be described as 'post-revolutionary reformism'. He refers to an article by Imre Pozsgay, 'Theory-Organisation-Movement', where the Hungarian scholar says Marxists-Leninists are aware that progress is not necessarily impelled by conflicts of societal dimensions but by reform measures based on knowledge and insight. 'In a country which has completed laying the foundations of socialism,' Fischer

quotes the Hungarian scholar as saying, 'the revolution assumes the shape of reform.'\*

Fischer thinks he has exposed the Marxists' reluctance to continue the revolution. He does not understand that the only reason progress can be achieved by reform is that the revolution has fulfilled its main task and there are no more class antagonisms in society. In the old society, on the other hand, reform can help improve working conditions and conditions of life for the oppressed classes (provided it is carried out under their pressure), but can in no way lead to a radical change of system.

This applies equally, as we have said, to 'system-changing' or structural reforms. In substance, these reforms may be taken to imply actions aimed at more substantial, more radical changes. Some reforms are superficial, touching on secondary details of the social pattern, and some may be serious and deep-going, touching on the motive centres of the system. They create favourable conditions for the victory of revolution but, I repeat, they cannot replace revolution. In that sense, the word 'system-changing' in combination with the word 'reform' is an illogicality.

If we look at the reformist doctrines from this angle, we will see that their ultimate objective is to deny the need for transferring power to the working class and for abolishing private property in the means of production. It is very likely that not all architects of reformist doctrines are aware of this. Some of them sincerely think that they have succeeded in modifying 'old man Marx' to accommodate the new conditions and in finding a door to the future by-passing socialist revolution. These people are mistaken, no less. Because neither the stormy revolution in science and technology nor any of the other phenomena of our age have given any indication that the Marxist-Leninist theory of revolution has fallen behind the times.

It is another matter that the conditions in which revolution occurs have changed. It is safe to say, for example, that as a result of further changes in the relation of forces within national societies and on the world scale, the time is sure to come when the peaceful way of socialist revolution will become the only way. Other substantial changes in the nature of the revolutionary process may emerge, too. The search that is underway in communist parties of capitalist countries is, indeed, spurred by the wish to conceptualise the new conditions and direct revolutionary energy along the

\* Fischer, 'No Revolution in the Revolution', in *International Journal*, Toronto, Summer 1973, pp. 455-6, with quotations from *Társadalmi Szemle*, Budapest, November 1972.

requisite channel in order to avoid unnecessary sacrifice. But all these innovations do not abolish the postulate that power must be transferred to the hands of the working people, this being followed by the transformation of private into public property.

The historical necessity of revolution, says Polish scholar Jerzy Wiatr, manifests itself on the scale of the system as a whole, not necessarily in each country. The passage from feudalism to capitalism occurred in some countries without a bourgeois revolution but under the impact of such a revolution in some other country (see *Nowe drogi*, Warsaw, No. 8, 1971, p. 86).

Social Democrat Fritz Vilmar, of West Berlin, writes that the road of gradual reforms to democratic socialism implies system-changing reforms. These have 'the purpose of securing the self-determination or participation of man in all fields of social life; the elimination of estrangement and of social and psychological impoverishment; the establishment of a public order in which there will be no power and no domination over men that are not really and democratically controlled and that are not reduced to the unavoidable functional minimum'. He adds: 'We reject the kind of reformism that is designed for social adaptation, integration, and higher technical efficiency of existing systems' (*Die Neue Gesellschaft*, Bonn-Bad Godesberg, July 1975, p. 585).

Pronouncements of this sort show that some Social Democrats, at least those of the left wing, have begun to understand that it is high time to move ahead. But they also show that Social Democrats still haven't learned to distinguish between reformism and revolution, and that they do not, consequently, set themselves the deliberate goal of abolishing capitalism and building socialism, with all that this entails.

Here is a typical confession, this time by Robert Pontillon, national secretary for international relations of the Socialist Party of France. He examines the reasons for the Swedish Social Democrats' election defeat, and arrives at the conclusion that the modern socialist movement has not yet found its own way in face of the pressures of capitalist economy. This obstructs advance to socialism, and explains the society of compulsion, which suppresses man and throttles democracy. 'The Swedish experiment' he writes, 'was an attempt to find this road. The defeat suffered by the Swedish Social Democrats, therefore, is well worth thinking about, and this not only in Stockholm.' He amplifies: 'To be consistent, reformism must sooner or later go beyond reforms as such' (*Quotidien de Paris*, 23 September 1976).

The inconsistency of the present-day Social Democrats on the question of revolution and reform is best seen from the

pronouncements of François Mitterand. He takes a fairly sound view of the line of the French Socialists, who had, he says, from 1947 to 1965 'rallied to the defence of capitalist society to the point of furnishing their votes and their ministers to a regime that had issued from a military coup d'état.' He recalls with hurt that when he had one day referred to 'socialism of the possible' some people thought him a heretic, reformist, or time-server. 'I refuse to be a manager of capitalist society, he exclaims. 'Simply, I believe that for a certain time we shall coexist with the capitalist structures because they cannot be transformed overnight.' And this is capped by the following: 'Opportunism and betrayal have gravely discredited reformism which I, for one, do not condemn. Far from condemning it, in fact, I consider it the only mode of action possible at the present time ... when revolution is neither possible nor desirable.'\* In other words, the leader of the French Socialists commits the very same mistake whose sense I have endeavoured to demonstrate in my exposition of the issue at hand—he contraposes revolution and reform.

Revolution and reform ought not to be seen as two mutually exclusive roads to socialism. They supplement one another. Both are essential, both unavoidable. Reforms lay the ground for the offensive of socialism, but they cannot create islands of socialist society in a capitalist environment.

Summing up the economic and political changes in modern capitalism, Gus Hall stressed: 'Capitalism remains capitalism but the changes are preparing the foundation of socialism' (Hall, *Imperialism Today. An Evaluation of Major Issues and Events of Our Time*, International Publishers, New York, 1972, p. 26).

Reforms bring about quantitative changes chiefly, whereas radical qualitative changes can be wrought by revolution and revolution only.

To sum up, there is only one answer to the question: 'reform or revolution?' and that is: revolution and reform.

The *Monthly Review* once wrote: 'Under the doctrines of peaceful coexistence and peaceful transition to socialism ... it is possible to be both reformist and revolutionary at the same time' (*Monthly Review*, New York, No. 2, 1974). This was meant to be sarcastic. But there was nothing to be sarcastic about. Marxists-Leninists have always admitted the necessity of both revolution and reform.

However influential the political and intellectual forces behind reformism may still be, the movement is doomed because the road

\* Mitterand, *Un Socialisme du possible*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1970, pp. 13, 17.

of social progress cannot avoid the big crossing of social revolution.

It stands to reason that a revolution does not come about by itself. The conditions must be ripe for it. The mass of the working people and their political party must be conscious of the possibility of performing a radical overturn. Much depends on the relation of forces within the country and on the international scene. By operating against these objective tendencies, the reformist forces might, for a time, retard or stave off the course of events. But they cannot abrogate the inexorable process of history. And the day when their retarding influence is no longer able to counterbalance the mighty movement of the masses spurred by the imperatives of social development—that day Social Democracy or at least its reformist wing will begin losing prestige and authority, and will roll to the wayside of social progress.

## CH. 5. FREEDOM OR EQUALITY?

The relation of the two great democratic slogans, freedom and equality, has engaged the minds of political thinkers since antiquity. Many found no way of defining the concept of freedom other than in conjunction with the concept of equality. For Aristotle to be free meant to be equal before the law or to have an equal right to justice. This tradition was more profoundly expressed in the concept of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the other great enlighteners of the eve of the bourgeois revolution, who proclaimed the *contrat social* and the non-alienable rights of the individual.

*Liberté, égalité, fraternité*—this proud triumvirate, it seemed, had taken command in France and stretched its wings over the rest of the world since the day the Bastille fell under the onslaught of the Parisian commonalty and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen was issued for the edification of all the world. Since that day these three principles supplemented each other and were in every sense inseparable.

Yet some time ago—oh, strange metamorphosis—Western political scientists began arguing that there is a contradiction between freedom and equality. To begin with, they spotted a few individual distinctions. Then they said the two concepts were partially incompatible. And after concluding that the two were wholly antithetical they slowly drifted to the contention that one wholly excluded the other.

Apart from various disquisitions of a so to say theoretical sort, there appeared references to such authorities as Alexis de Tocqueville. And any reference to old texts, as we know, is meant as evidence that what we are being offered is not a timid innovation tendered by a lone eccentric but a theory staking out a claim to noble ancestry and poised for battle to assert itself.

True, it is still too early to say that all bourgeois social scientists have adopted the novelty. But there is already a pool of theorists



and propagandists asserting that freedom and equality are incompatible. They maintain, indeed, that very soon mankind will have to make a final choice in favour of the one or the other. In other words, if the dilemma isn't phony, the human family is ordained to have either freedom without equality or equality without freedom. Need I say that in either case the prospect is anything but pleasant.

West German sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf distinguishes between two kinds of democracy—one democracy in the sense of equality, and the other in the sense of freedom. He observes that as either of them develops it reaches a point where equality becomes a barrier to freedom. 'Though man directed from outside is historically the almost logical embodiment of democracy as a way of life, he threatens the foundation of democracy as a way of government. The world of people directed from outside presents the peculiar paradox of a democracy without freedom.' He goes on to say that democracy 'is simultaneously something more and something less than freedom: more insofar as the concept implies a certain arrangement of institutions and not only the goal for which these were set up, and less insofar as political democracy is able to create only a few of the essential conditions for freedom.'\*

The reader must have noticed how arbitrarily Dahrendorf treats the concept of democracy: in effect, it is reduced to equality, a primitive type of equality. Since he is talking of an equality of men directed from outside, one can't help associating it with the barrack-room. And the so interpreted idea of equality can, of course, without any strain be portrayed as the antithesis of freedom. But dealing in that fashion one can contrapose anything to anything.

But here is one more disquisition, this one belonging to Dimitris N. Chorafas, an expert on so-called social technocracy: 'People are unequal, and the multiplicity of outstanding spirits, and not conformism, normality, or complete adaptation, represents the foundation of successful societies.'\*\* The hidden and laughable desire of equality, says Chorafas, is continuously exploited by demagogues, who clothe freedom in the buffoon's garb of this illusion.

Chorafas follows in Dahrendorf's footsteps to identify equality with all the mortal sins ('plebeian quality of mass culture', 'unifi-

cation of the mentality', and the like), and does so much more straightforwardly. For him the model of future man is a 'hunter for ideas' whose spirit rises high above the petty and insignificant ordinary reason. He maintains that a society 'based on consensus has no future, because it subjects the individual to the tyranny of mass media and brings about a decline of aesthetic tastes and a distortion of the historical perspective'.

Different writers contrapose equality to freedom with varying degrees of emphasis, for they draw different conclusions.

Some say with a trace of regret that equality will evidently have to be sacrificed (at least in part) in order to preserve freedom. Others, who do not conceal their predilection for aristocratic arrangements, declare triumphantly that equality is a utopian dream, a plebeian fancy that history has totally disproved.

In a discussion of democracy by supporters of the 'socialist oriented' and liberal currents in the FRG, the former insisted on the broader participation of the masses in political decision-making, while the latter thought the political activity of the people should be confined to electing their leaders.

I have deliberately put the term 'socialist oriented' in inverted commas, because of the curtailed conception of socialism expounded by West European, and notably West German, political scientists. The authors of *Social Inequality* give the following evaluation by members of the elite of their own political orientation: 17 per cent styled themselves socialists, and 49 per cent liberals. The poll was among members of the ruling stratum in key posts in education, mass media, trade unions, and political parties (see K. Bolte, D. Kappe, F. Neidhardt, *Soziale Ungleichheit*, Opladen, 1974).

In his comments on the above-mentioned discussion, the progressive West German theorist, Martin Greiffenhagen,\* observed that the contraposition of the liberal concept of democracy to all forms of so-called participation democracy is based on the historically and theoretically untenable notion of democracy being a Janus of two faces, with its dark side being equality and, consequently, totalitarianism, and the bright side being freedom and, consequently, humanism. Greiffenhagen lashes out at Helmut Schelsky, an exponent of 'liberal conservatism' who calls for 'more democracy—less freedom'.

Schelsky belongs to a group of neoconservative philosophers and sociologists who are trying to exonerate themselves of charges of retrogression and, more, win the reputation of innovators. They espouse the slogans of Franz Josef Strauss, leader of the Christian-

\* Dahrendorf, *Konflikt und Freiheit*, R. Piper & Co. Verlag, Munich, 1972, p. 190.

\*\* Chorafas, *Die kranke Gesellschaft. Vor dem Zusammenbruch von Freiheit und Wohlstand*, Ullstein, Frankfurt-Berlin-Vienna, 1974, p. 60.

\* Greiffenhagen, *Freiheit gegen Gleichheit?* Hoffman und Campe, Hamburg, 1975, pp. 36-37.

Social Union, who says that to be a conservative is to march at the head of progress. What he means by the progress is revealed in the outspoken pronouncement of neoconservative Hans-Dietrich Sander: 'The battle is to be fought under the motto of domination of man over man which, considering the state of things, can be pronounced with a clear conscience' (*Die Neue Gesellschaft*, No. 1, 1976).

Conservatives, even those with the prefix 'neo', have their own idea of a clear conscience. But why pose as progressivists? Doubly so if this is counterproductive. One need not be an expert in the history of political doctrines to notice that the arguments of the modern foes of equality are no more than a repetition of all the inventions circulated on this score by the ideologists of slavery and feudalism—the familiar tunes about equality leading to a decline of material wealth and spiritual culture, and about 'mob' rule inevitably leading to totalitarianism. Then the argument about the rule of the select (by birth, status, ability), though contrary to the primitive call of justice, being the means that secures the advancement of civilisation, an order of reason, and the well-being of all, including the commonalty.

This is nothing if not a return to the pre-capitalist stage of political thinking, an undisguised apology of class inequality, an appeal to God or the natural order ('all that exists is sensible') or to the idea of a spurious universal advantage. Yet it is no attack of nostalgia, no yearning for the 'good old time'. No fear. *It is an attempt to revive in the new conditions the philosophy of inequality, to give it an up-to-date explanation (including references to the needs of the scientific-technical revolution), and to impose it on the social consciousness as an ostensibly inevitable and even preferable ideological foundation of future society.*

Before going into the causes that power this ideological phenomenon it may be worthwhile recalling the content of the bourgeois stage of the concepts of equality and freedom. What heritage do the neoconservatives and other theorists contraposing these two great values want to fling overboard?

Marx and Engels made a profound study of the overturn brought about by the bourgeois revolution. On the social plane, it proclaimed two principles as the pillars of the entire social arrangement. First, freedom of the individual, meaning chiefly unlimited freedom of private enterprise and private property. Second, equality of all before the law, meaning chiefly freedom of unrestricted exchange among private commodity producers, including purchase and sale of labour power.

The principles of freedom and equality, wrote Marx and Engels, flow from the nature of the capitalist mode of production. The latter could not exist without them. Inevitably, they are restricted and in many ways merely formal. Figuratively speaking, freedom of the individual is distributed unequally, and equality is gained anything but freely. Both exist to the extent to which they are needed for the capitalist system to function smoothly. Not one iota more.

The founders of Marxist-Leninist theory stressed that the bourgeois revolution broke the feudal chains that retarded the growth of the productive forces, and rang in great progress in the entire system of social relations. But its class limitations, the survival of private property and of exploitation of man by man as the foundation of the social system, determined the hypocritical nature of bourgeois democracy.

Lenin wrote: 'An abstract or formal posing of the problem of equality in general and national equality in particular is in the very nature of bourgeois democracy. Under the guise of the equality of the individual in general, bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal or legal equality of the property-owner and the proletarian, the exploiter and the exploited, thereby grossly deceiving the oppressed classes. On the plea that all men are absolutely equal, the bourgeoisie is transforming the idea of equality, which is itself a reflection of relations in commodity production, into a weapon in its struggle against the abolition of classes. The real meaning of the demand for equality consists in its being a demand for the abolition of classes.\*'

Bourgeois science and propaganda have worked hard in the past two hundred years to build an armorium of arguments in favour of the rule of capital. In the case of some spheres of the social arrangement, especially in the case of economic phenomena, these arguments have become so ingenious that it is hard to spot the artful dodge employed to conceal the truth.

But in the case of the subject at hand, bourgeois ideology has proved barren, and produced no new arguments. Referring to an abstract, non-existent man, it maintained that he was equal in rights and duties to all his co-citizens, and deliberately ignored the material side of things, the difference in people's property status. In the final analysis, it proclaimed the equality of exploiter and exploited, the fed and the unfed.

Naturally, this propaganda falls short of its mark, because the

\* V. I. Lenin, 'Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 145.

working people learn the true price of bourgeois freedom and bourgeois equality at first hand. H. G. Wells said bourgeois equality meant one's money was as good as the next man's, while Anatole France observed about bourgeois freedom that millionaire and pauper were equally free to spend the night under the bridges of the Seine.

Matters do not boil down to mere property differences. The destitute are deprived of the chance of using the invaluable benefits of free choice granted them by the constitution. Where there is no equality in fact there can be no full equality of citizens before the law.

This old propaganda ploy, which had for years deceived the working people, is becoming less effective in this age of universal political enlightenment. That is doubtless the motive for the far-flung search of new concepts and arguments to influence the masses and to dampen if not remove the disaffection generated by the prevailing social injustices.

But not this, purely functional, reason is the chief motive for the revision of the old bourgeois conceptions of freedom and equality or, more precisely, of their relation to one another. There are more serious reasons of, one may say, an organic origin.

The first one is that for a long time after the Second World War the supporters of capitalism were firmly convinced that the upswing of economic power impelled by the scientific-technical revolution would automatically blunt the more socially dangerous flaws in the capitalist economic structure.

As I have already said in the chapter on techno-idylls, they counted on a visible closing of the incomes gap through the raising of occupational qualifications, with the result that almost all society would strike a balance within the framework of a 'middle class'. Not to destroy this idyllic picture, futurologists either simply ignored the sensitive question of how to align the 'incomes revolution' with private ownership or, like Bell, made short work of it by means of various sophisms.

The course of events tore holes in their expectations. There is no denying that the scientific-technical revolution and those of its aspects on which the bourgeois theorists pinned their hopes did bring about a definite accumulation of elements of equality as compared with the earlier stages of capitalism. The sociologists who present figures to show that skilled worker Smith is no worse off these days than shopkeeper Adams, and that both of them are approaching the living standard of college instructor Jones, are probably right.

But this does not alter the fact that the gap between the top strata of society and the bulk of the people with medium and low incomes continues to widen. Leading Western economists, like Galbraith, admit that the gap between the mass of people selling their labour and the monopolists, those who get their share of the profits directly or indirectly, is tending to widen rather than close.

Bourgeois propaganda is not remiss in exploiting the relatively high living standard of the bulk of the people in the developed capitalist states. But it does not say that this well-being is largely acquired through neocolonial plunder of economically underdeveloped states, and is thus offset by the poverty and hunger along the imperialist periphery. The inequality deriving from the rule of capital must not be measured in isolation from the relationship of colonies and metropolitan countries, the economically underdeveloped countries and the developed capitalist states.

True, there are those who maintain that the former metropolitan countries are not responsible for the backwardness of their former colonies. The latter had been at so low a level of development, they claim, that colonialism could not have retarded their advancement, much less thrown them back. On the contrary, it helped create an economic infrastructure, the rudiments of industry which, even though it produced mainly exportable primary goods, had given birth to a working class, rudimentary education and health care, and opened a window to the values of world civilisation. From this it is one step to the conclusion that colonialism, especially neocolonialism, is a way of eliminating backwardness.

There is no denying that capitalism has done some good to the colonies. But what it did was not one iota more than what it had to do to exploit them profitably. Goods cannot be shipped out unless there are roads. Management cannot function unless there is a telegraph. Local staff cannot do one's bidding unless there is education, at least primary education. In short, whatever tiny share of the wealth taken from the colonies was returned to them, did not come from the heart.

The industrialised capitalist states won their riches chiefly by plundering colonies and through non-equivalent exchange. Let us suppose for a minute that Britain had not put India under its control by force of arms and had not, nearly three hundred years ago, granted the East India Company a charter for that great country's merciless exploitation, and had instead concluded a mutually beneficial agreement with it and begun trading on equal terms. Let us further suppose that this fine example had been followed by the other European countries and, later, the United



States, in relation to all the lands of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It is safe to say that there would have been a visible closing of the wide gap, the abyss, that now divides the economically advanced and the economically backward countries.

It is also very likely that Western technical civilisation would have been of a somewhat lower order, since its swift growth had been substantially spurred by the 'injections' of natural resources plundered in colonies and semi-colonies, and by their cheap labour. But this insignificant loss would have been amply compensated by the element of equality in international relations. It is safe to assume that solidarity and concerted effort would in the long term have yielded magnificent fruit in coming to grips with today's vital problems, such as hunger, poverty, and disease.

Naturally, these conjectures cannot substitute for statistical data. For many the painful consequences and dangers of colonialism and neocolonialism had been unclear—until a certain time. Official science, supplier of pilot's directions for the political course of the imperialist powers, devoted the minimum of attention to the matter. Exposures of direct and indirect methods of plundering economically backward countries in the Marxist press were either ignored or declared Bolshevik subversive propaganda.

Matters began to change in the late fifties and early sixties, when exhaustive studies appeared of the disastrous state of hundreds of millions of people suffering hunger (notably that of Josue de Castro, the eminent Brazilian scholar). That was when the United Nations got its Statistical Commission to compile and publish data on the gap in per capita national incomes, and when the early forecasts showed that the gap was continuing to widen.

At that time, the industrialised capitalist states hoped that various aid programmes would mitigate some of the more urgent needs of the Asian, African, and Latin American countries, would halt the widening of the rift, and thereby take the edge off the anti-imperialist sentiment in the zone of the national liberation movement.

But these hopes were in vain. The aid programmes became yet another avenue for exploiting the resources of economically underdeveloped countries by multinational, chiefly American, monopolies.

Imperialism may be said to have misled its own scholars. When the latter came to their senses they launched studies in the early Club of Rome style, abounding in panicky misgivings about the world economic outlook. They admitted that capitalism as a system was not only responsible for the inequality, but also unable to prevent still greater inequality, with all the dangers this entailed.

The same applies to inequality between nations and ethnic groups living under one national flag. It would appear that the developed capitalist states with their affluence could easily abolish the economic grounds for internal national strife. That, indeed, was the course assiduously advocated by the makers of various social engineering concepts. But things have gone the other way. And this not only in the United States, where discrimination of Blacks and other national minorities is a built-in feature of the social order, but also in those capitalist states where national and ethnic inequality was little felt until recently, namely, Britain, Belgium, and Canada.

In sum, inequality is growing in scale in all the chief sectors of life in the capitalist world. And this bourgeois science has been compelled to admit.

The other reason for the surfacing new approach to the meaning of democracy is directly associated with the above: *Socialism has proved that factual equality both in social and national relations is quite feasible.*

The introduction of social ownership of the means of production and of socialist principles of labour and distribution was alone a giant step forward towards abolishing inequality. Throughout the building of the new society in the Soviet Union and the other socialist states there was in effect an unintermittent accumulation of the elements of equality. The process continues today, affecting all aspects of equality—equality of people in general, equality of men and women, equality of members of different nations, and so forth.

In my *The Destiny of the World* (pp. 83-110), I cite data showing how much progress has been made in this respect through the establishment of developed socialist society in the USSR. The factual equality of nations, enshrined in the Constitution of the Soviet state of the whole people, may be regarded as a truly historic achievement. By and large, it is the first time that deliberate and purpose-oriented policy abolished national inequality and brought nations and ethnic groups into one family, in which there is comradesly co-operation and mutual assistance.

I will not be wrong in saying that the solution of the national question is alone ample proof of socialism's superiority to capitalism, establishing its right to develop into the sole form of society in the future. This I maintain because the socialist principles governing relations between nations (above all the establishment of factual equality by levelling up economic and cultural development) have shown themselves to be effective both

in a multinational state and in the broader framework of the community of socialist states. In other words, the tendency is not a particular but a universal regularity secured by the new social and economic system.

The realness of equality in the socialist environment was probably what chiefly compelled bourgeois theorists (at least the more serious and honest ones) to quit identifying capitalism with equality. This identity could be propagated when capitalism reigned alone and the world knew nothing else. Now, with socialism having come on the scene, and a developed socialism at that which has sufficiently demonstrated its potentialities, that would be a deliberate lie.

In other words, capitalism may be described as a system of equality *as compared with the past*, with slavery or feudalism, but it is a system of inequality *as compared with the present and future*, with socialism and communism.

Political theory must recognise the facts. It must also draw the right conclusions. But while progressive Western sociologists were moved by new evidence of the incompatibility of capitalism and equality to take a step towards socialism, the conservative current chose differently: since equality and capitalism go different ways, to hell with equality.

No, they did not simply disavow an idea that had for several centuries occupied a place of honour in the bourgeois book. Abandoning the equality slogan (and incurring the loss of its tremendous propaganda potential), they went out of their way to discredit equality.

That is why the dramatic metamorphosis in interpreting the everlasting ideals of democracy is not reduced to a mere pronouncement of their incompatibility. The main thrust is to belittle the idea of equality, to depose it, to declare it contrary to the progress of society and to the interests of the individual. This is a masterly ideological operation following which all social groups (there is the paradox!) are to give up their wish of equality without regret and, more, with enthusiasm.

Mind you, the conservative theorists do not fail to consider their own reputation. No one is to say they are obscurantist, that they are for returning to the Middle Ages. Do not their arguments indicate their wish 'to march at the head of progress'? They do not oppose equality as the haughty aristocrats whom the Montagnards sent to the guillotine. They demonstrate in scholarly fashion that the idea of equality has outlived its time, that it is an obstacle to efficient economics and to people's well-being.

*Capitalism equals freedom equals progress*, say the neo-conservatives, while *socialism equals equality equals stagnation*. And certain other bourgeois sociologists are beginning to accept this.

It is common knowledge that each component of the above formula was in its day the target of definitive Marxist criticism.

To begin with, it is false to identify capitalism with freedom. The capitalist mode of production makes obligatory only one aspect of freedom—freedom of private enterprise. That alone bears the seeds of inevitable curtailment of and impingement upon its other aspects. Production based on private property is impossible without the exploitation of labour and, consequently, without curtailing the free will of people who comprise the vast majority of society. The interests of the proprietor come into continual conflict with the social interests. And the only way it is resolved is by encroaching on the freedom of one of the parties.

The crucial point here is that the concept of freedom cannot be reduced to the freedom of unrestricted choice (a broader variant, so to speak, of the same private enterprise). Yet precisely this is what bourgeois philosophy and sociology understand by freedom. One of the crowning achievements of Marxist-Leninist thought is that it has worked out the *positive content* of freedom, briefly expressed in the formula, 'all-round development of the personality'.

Second, it is false to identify freedom with progress, even with mere economic efficiency. In the general democratic sense (or as it was proclaimed by the bourgeois revolution), freedom of the individual is an incontestably important condition for the growth of the productive forces. But the bourgeois limitations imposed on its application set a ceiling to economic and, especially, scientific and technical progress. Recall Marx's striking conclusion: at a definite stage of social development the private-property form of production and appropriation of material goods becomes a curb on the productive forces and must be demolished. The hour of socialist revolution strikes. In place of private interest as the stimulant of activity comes the public interest which, however, in no way suppresses personal interest. This means in substance that the latter ceases to be at loggerheads with the needs of society; objective harmony appears between the two.

This harmony is *objective*, because it depends in large measure on how people, classes, and parties understand the laws of the new system and how well they learn to use them. Tremendously important, too, is experience, which allows for picking the optimum methods of harmonising the personal interest with the public. This harmony is secured not automatically, but at the point of maturity of socialist social relations.

The speculation about economic efficiency being a function of freedom and being tied up as such with the capitalist mode of production, reposes precariously on just one fact, namely, that the capitalist system has so far survived in the economically most highly-developed states of the world. But I challenge anyone to prove that these states have risen to the top thanks to capitalism alone. It is common knowledge that long before their bourgeois revolutions, Britain, France, Germany and other West European states comprised the foremost region of the world in terms of technical and humanitarian civilisation. They accounted for the greatest succession of discoveries, for the most advanced enterprises of their time, for the highest volume of production, and so on.

As the more advanced mode of production than feudalism, capitalism substantially accelerated the growth of the productive forces. But this is hardly a valid reason for concluding that high economic efficiency is attainable exclusively under capitalism. At present, socialism has not yet shown all its potentialities, and this in no small measure because the socialist revolution had initially triumphed in a group of mainly economically underdeveloped countries.

Let me repeat that this does not write off the stimulus given to production and to the productivity of labour by the principles of competition and private enterprise in general. The lust for personal gain, for enrichment, was and so far remains a strong motivation for diligent labour, because for millennia people were conditioned by a society whose central law was to fight for survival.

But socialism can generate powerful incentives by influencing other qualities inherent in human nature. Nor does it abolish rewards, though they are given a different form. The place of competition is taken by comradely emulation and concern for the common good, which largely determines the personal good.

It is still too early to speak of the impact the communist system as a whole will make on the productivity of labour, but there is more than enough evidence to evaluate the first steps. The socialist countries are far ahead of the capitalist states in rates of economic development. It follows that socialism is able to produce higher results in other economic areas and, ultimately, reach the general objective set by Lenin, that of securing a higher productivity of social labour. That is only a question of time.

Third, freedom, by which we here understand the private or personal motivation for activity, is only one of many conditions for social progress. Another such condition is equality, the very same

that bourgeois ideologists now all but declare a cause of economic stagnation.

The ideological stimuli set in motion by socialism are essentially associated with the elimination of the former class antagonisms and the various attendant forms of social inequality. Without an equal relation to the means of production, without labour being obligatory for all, and without distribution according to the quantity and quality of work—without all this there could be no comradely mutual assistance in production, no socialist emulation, and no other tokens of concern for the success of the production group and for the progress of society.

Alongside the moral side of things, we must bear in mind the direct and objective link between social equality and the development of society. Subordination to the interests not of a narrow elite but of *all* social strata, of society as a whole, paves the way for the most harmonious relation of current needs to long-term aims, of society to the environment, of scientific and technical progress to the humanitarian ideal of man's happiness.

It needs no saying that here, too, nothing is automatic. It will probably take a whole era for mankind to take possession of all that may be described as the productive force of social equality. But the early achievements along this road permit us to say that it will impel a new advance of civilisation.

And one more point. When the neoconservatives say equality is to blame for low efficiency, they ignore the obvious fact that it has played (and, naturally, continues to play) the role of an exceedingly important stimulant of the capitalist mode of production.

Western Europe, as we have already had occasion to register, was the most highly-developed region of the world before capitalism ever came on the scene. It is equally true that it retained, and substantially consolidated, its leading place in industrial development chiefly through the liberation of peasants from feudal bondage, through the abolition of estates, and the establishment of equality among commodity producers.

*'The equality and equal status of all human labour, because and in so far as it is human labour, found its unconscious but clearest expression in the law of value of modern bourgeois political economy' (Frederick Engels, Anti-Dühring, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 130).*

Equality before the law, like freedom of the individual (private enterprise), was the spur whereby the bourgeois revolution gave fresh impulse to the West European economy. Granted that these principles were formal and that their application was restricted. But they were, and still are, the condition for economic and all



other progress, and this until the time when the socialist revolution gives them a new unrestricted and non-formal shape. In other words, by crusading against equality the neoconservatives are in a way cutting the ground from under their own feet, that is, taking issue with something that constitutes one of the last remaining assets of capitalism.

It is now time to dwell on the attempts of certain bourgeois social scientists to establish a direct and purportedly necessary link between equality and totalitarianism. The propaganda of this idea betrays the exploiters' ages-long class hatred of the working people, the blind arrogance of those who thought that power belonged to them by the right of birth or the possession of wealth, those who were indignant, even hurt if you like, by the attempts of the 'mob' to encroach on their patrimony.

When producing the formula 'socialism equals equality equals totalitarianism', the rightists naturally gave no thought to where tyranny and despotism came from when there was yet no hint of socialism. They wouldn't. For just posing that question would destroy the anti-communist invention and show that totalitarianism is a product of the exploiting classes and a direct consequence of class inequality.

The dread that the commonalty will claim its rights and strip the powerful of their present privileges has led the latter to ludicrous foolishness. West German conservatives, for example, charge liberals of trying to establish 'totalitarian control'. They go out of their way to impress on these wholly respectable theorists from their own, bourgeois camp, far removed from any revolutionary sentiment, that substitution of the will of the majority for professional competence would reduce ideology to a primitive state and lower the rationale of political solutions, and that participation of the working people in production management would lead to economic dislocation, even exorcise the spectre of civil war.

These and similar pronouncements are to be found in abundance in Helmut Schelsky's book, *Systemüberwindung. Demokratisierung und Gewaltenteilung. Grundsatzkonflikte der Bundesrepublik* (Verlag, C. H. Neck, Munich, 1973).

Understandably, there are highly-specific political designs behind these and similar theoretical arguments. The neoconservatives, who are the attacking ideological flank of the CDU/CSU, train their guns on the coalition of Social Democrats and the Free Democratic Party in a bid to drive off their middle-class electors. But the historical background of the ideological struggle, the various concrete circumstances impelling the events,

must not, of course, affect the impartial evaluation of the ideas that are put into circulation.

The important thing is not that the Christian Democrats are fighting tooth and nail against their rivals, but that their ideologists see fit, even *advantageous*, to come out publicly against equality and democracy. This is a novel thing in bourgeois political thought. And it speaks of the depth of the political and ideological crisis of capitalism. *Now the bourgeoisie does not confine itself to restricting rights in practice, as it did at all times, but is also abdicating the remnants of democracy in its programme, candidly shifting thereby to retrograde positions.*

Here are a few samples of its arguments. Schelsky warned in his day that the Brandt-Scheel government programme, which was certainly more than modest as concerned social aims, would aggravate the basic conflict in society, and split the political forces of the state into two opposite blocs. This, he said, was liable to destroy the 'free democratic system'. One would think there was no class division in the FRG today, and that everything boiled down to the evil designs of the Socialists, who were dividing the 'close-knit family' of workers and capitalists. Those who relied on the young dreamers of social justice, the oracle warned, were stumbling blindly into a new form of slavery. To avert this sad fate, they should limit their political ambitions to participation in elections, and entrust government to the astute, hardheaded technocrats.

A familiar tune. Describing Schelsky's disquisition as a 'model of elitarian democracy', Jürgen Feick, a Frankfurt political scientist, called attention to its link with the 'authoritarian models of government' conceived by Max Weber or Joseph A. Schumpeter or Karl Mannheim. As Feick sees it, in the event of social conflicts these models could easily generate fascist sentiment. He recalls, furthermore, that the democratic institutions of the Weimar Republic were undermined by analogous arguments.\* A good point, and one worth heeding.

The imagination of the foes of equality is especially fertile when it addresses itself to the socialist political system. No holds are barred. Facts exposed by Marxists-Leninists are garnished with fantastic inventions, producing judgements that are a mockery of logic, a parody of the truth.

The contention that the social and political system of socialism reposes on totalitarian forms of rule is the axis of all anti-

\* Feick, *Der neue Konservatismus der siebziger Jahre*, Rowohlt, Hamburg, 1974, pp. 49 and 52.

communist propaganda. It will probably be worth our while, therefore, to deal with the topic specially, concentrating on the chief object of the speculation—the cult of the individual.

The founders of the science of communism emphasised time and again that the new society is not created in a laboratory, that it will be the product of a revolutionary reconstruction of the old world of exploitation, and will therefore in its early stages have to contend with the 'birth marks' of the past. Marx wrote of the post-revolution period: 'What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it was *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges.'<sup>\*</sup>

The most painful of this sad heritage is the ideology inimical to the principles of communism, and practice of the personality cult. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union condemned the cult of the individual, re-established socialist legality, and reaffirmed its determination to follow Lenin's principles in Party and state affairs. The cult was condemned as incompatible with socialism also in the documents of the vast majority of communist and workers' parties and the communist movement as a whole.

When in 1956 the 20th Congress of the CPSU branded the violations of socialist democracy in the USSR as a harmful effect of the cult of the individual, the reaction in the world was vehement and controversial. Imperialist propaganda, as was only to be expected, had a field day, exploiting the exposures to discredit socialism. For all through the post-war period the anti-communists had mainly one theme to harp on: that socialist countries were warlike, that the Communists were out to start another world war in a bid for world supremacy. Initially, this had helped keep up the level of hysteria the imperialists needed to spur the arms race, and divert the attention of the working people from the class struggle with slogans of 'national unity in face of the outside enemy' and 'unity of the non-communist world in face of the communist peril'.

But time passed, the fog thinned, the heretofore frightened man-in-the-street was having second thoughts. It was beginning to sink in that the communist peril was a spectre that helped to pump money out of the taxpayer's pocket into the safes of arms manufacturers. The circulation of *Fortune*, which specialised in scares of

<sup>\*</sup> Karl Marx, 'Critique of the Gotha Programme', in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Volume III, p. 17.

Soviet aggression, was going down. The science-fiction paperbacks with lurid descriptions of Soviet missiles showering New York or London or Paris in 1960 or 1970 or 1980, lost their market. The crisis of anti-communism became so apparent that even anti-communists sat up and took notice.

That was when this new material had come to hand. With the greed of gold prospectors who had stumbled on a rich vein, the anti-communist propaganda masterminds seized on the 'incompatibility' of democracy and socialism. The topic was not novel for them, but never before had they had such sensational material, and this straight from the horse's mouth.

The anti-communists made the most of it, and with a show of impartiality. To say that nothing was right with your rival would cause suspicion. So they stopped saying the socialist countries were planning to end civilisation with the atom bomb. They were said to have cooled off. Coexistence was said to be more or less sufferable. It was further admitted that the socialist system was capable of rapid industrial development and could build an all-inclusive system of social security. How authentic, against this background, was the damnable 'BUT'. Yes, socialism was not too bloodthirsty, not too helpless, but look at the price it exacted—flouting elementary human rights and depriving man of that priceless gift of nature, freedom of the individual.

It will be only fair to add that anxious and sound voices did resound above this elated trumpeting. The more farsighted writers were aware that the exposure of the personality cult and the policy of uprooting its negative consequences would strengthen socialism, while impairing imperialism's positions in the political and ideological struggle. They warned their peers that once free from the chains of the cult, socialist society would swiftly and effectively resolve its problems in the economic and other fields, and redouble its power of attraction.

The leaders and theorists of the social-democratic movement reacted to the resolutions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU in a manner all their own. The personality cult revelations they received as confirmation of their programme of 'democratic socialism'. Nenni, Guy Mollet, Spaak and Morrison moderately welcomed the new course of the communist parties as outlined in the 1957 Moscow Declaration, then gave voice to the thought that the personality cult restrictions on democracy had caused the Soviet system to substitute a bureaucratic state apparatus for revolutionary institutions.

More than twenty years have passed and, though all this time

bourgeois propaganda continuously capitalised on the personality cult topic, the results grew more and more meagre. The working people in the capitalist states, including the intellectuals to whom the professional critics of socialist democracy addressed themselves in the first place, learned more and more about life in the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community. The economic and cultural successes, the steadily rising prosperity, and the continuous extension of socialist democracy were graphic evidence that the socialist system had not 'degenerated'.

Those years were highlighted by such crucial developments as the growth of the Soviet state into a state of the whole people, the adoption of the 1977 Constitution of the USSR, and far-reaching changes in the constitutional legislation of other socialist countries designed to further extend the social rights and political freedoms of citizens, and secure their effective participation in management.

This evidence was accepted by all save the ideologists of anti-communism, who in the teeth of the facts stuck to their story that socialism was a source of totalitarian rule. The topic was developed in plump politological volumes, preached at university lectures, and methodically drummed into the heads of neophyte scientists. As a result, it became an all but universal stereotype among these people.

The stereotype took root in different heads for different reasons—the shortage of trustworthy information, ignorance of the principles of scientific communism, and so on. The main reason, however, was not of a gnostic nature, but political. Since it was designed to prove that totalitarian rule was a built-in feature of socialism, its roots were sought in the basic principles of the socialist mode of production and system of social relations. And it is easy to search and find if you have an 'answer' in advance. All you must do is pick more or less credible arguments.

These arguments are the following. In theory and practice, socialism reposes on public ownership of the means of production. Public ownership means concentration of economic power in the hands of the state, the ruling party and its leaders. Concentration of economic power leads inevitably to concentration of political power, to a one-man or group dictatorship. That dictatorship may be soft or hard, enlightened or unenlightened, but it is there, inescapable because the premises for a democratic order are lacking in the economic system. There are premises of that kind in competitive capitalism, which is a system of economic freedom, the essential condition for political freedom. Bourgeois theorists, such as Milton Friedman, for example, arrive at the conclusion that a

society which is socialist cannot also be democratic in the sense of guaranteeing individual freedom (see *World Marxist Review*, Prague, June, 1963, p. 60).

The interesting thing about these arguments is that *on the face of it* they follow the rule of scientific analysis—the nature of political institutions is inferred not from itself and not even from an ideology, but from the economic system, the material basis of society.

But here this is only the appearance of a scientific approach, an attempt to use the Marxist method to refute Marxist theory. To begin with, says Canadian Marxist Stanley Ryerson, the bourgeois theorists who identify democracy with capitalism (*only* capitalism) proceed from an 'increasingly unreal model of capitalism'. From its stage of free competition capitalism has long since advanced to the last, monopoly stage. Though here, too, some types and forms of competition survive, it is the concentration of the means of production, the centralisation of capital, the domination of powerful financial and industrial concerns, that determines the nature of the economic system. And if only competition can be the basis for a democratic order, bourgeois ideologists ought at least admit that state-monopoly capitalism does not work in favour of democracy.

Some Western writers do admit it. Giving credit to their consistency, it only remains to lament the future they predict for mankind. For if democracy is impossible other than under competitive capitalism and, therefore, is irretrievably lost, humanity faces the distasteful prospect of totalitarian dictatorship. That, indeed, is the mournful outlook painted by George Orwell in his novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* of which more later.

Irrespective of their consistency or inconsistency, bourgeois theorists base their constructions of democracy on the latter's identity with competitive capitalism. But to what extent is this true?

There is no denying that the capitalist mode of production paved the way and gave rise to the need for democratising political life. As we have noted before, the condition for capitalism is the freedom of each to do as he sees fit, coupled with the equality of each before the law.

But while the capitalist system cannot exist without the equality of commodity producers and without free sale and purchase of labour power, it requires nothing beyond that. The capitalist economy can function regardless of the form of government, in the presence or absence of universal suffrage, of the freedom of the



press, of trial by jury, of a cabinet accountable to parliament, and so on. These democratic institutions can, indeed, strongly influence the capitalist economy, but they are not determinative, not its *sine qua non*.

This is borne out by history, above all. It offers examples where capitalist relations prospered in even the framework of declining feudal monarchies, such as Austria-Hungary or tsarist Russia. Following the abolition of serfdom in Russia, for example, capitalism acquired the conditions it needed to develop, and tsarism was no obstacle to its attaining a fair degree of maturity within a short time. The same, and to a still greater degree, applied to the former Hapsburg empire.

That all capitalism needs to thrive is equality of commodity producers and free sale and purchase of labour power is proved by the frantic efforts of the bourgeoisie, when it gained power, to prevent any expansion of democracy. Once ensconced in ministerial armchairs, the very same factory-owners and shopkeepers who had stormed the palaces of autocrats together with the city poor, sent troops into the streets to disperse 'mobs' that clamoured for the promised freedom of assembly or for suffrage. In England, the land of classical bourgeois democracy, it took the mass of the people a century and a half of sharp class struggle to wrest the privilege of universal suffrage from the City bosses.

Not until 1832 did the Reform Act (described as a 'great' parliamentary reform) eliminate the system of 'rotten boroughs', giving access to parliament to representatives of the industrial bourgeoisie. It took a long series of reforms (1867, 1884, 1928, 1948) to abolish other restrictions on suffrage. Not until the 1928 reform, for example, did women gain equal electoral rights, and not until the 1948 reform did certain sections of the ruling class lose the privilege of plural voting. In France, until the end of the Second World War women, servicemen, sailors, and persons who had less than six months' residence in the constituency were deprived of suffrage. Fairly considerable restrictions on electoral rights survive in the United States, Switzerland, and certain other bourgeois democracies, let alone capitalist countries with various forms of totalitarian rule.

It stands to reason that the segments of the capitalist class that directly held the reins of power offered the strongest resistance to the introduction of democratic institutions. Rival groups usually formed parties of liberals or radicals, came out in opposition to the regime, and frequently went out into the streets. Seeking the economic privileges that always come with participation in political government, they became temporary abettors of progress. But the bourgeoisie as a whole, being the ruling class, was always distinguished by its distaste, if not hatred, of democratic institutions.

At times of acute political crises it has invariably sought salvation in military dictatorships.

French sociologist Michel Verret writes that a class state directly, or indirectly worships the principle of its own religion and its own cult. In France, he writes, there had been at least five cults of the personality over the past 160 years—those of Napoleon I, Napoleon III, Boulanger, and others (see Verret, *Théorie et Politique*, Editions Sociales, Paris, 1967, p. 13).

True the dictators were called in at times when order had to be restored. And were expected to retire once their mission was done, content with the titles of 'father of the nation' or 'saviour of the fatherland'. But they preferred to hang on to power until their dying day, and in some cases even to pass it on to their heirs.

It short, if we were to accept competitive capitalism as the ceiling of democracy, we would also have to accept that it was a very low ceiling. Its absolute value as the groundwork of democracy is that it established formal equality and the freedom to buy and sell labour power. These principles, implicit in the economic system of capitalist society, lie at the junction of economy and politics. All the other democratic principles and institutions which, as an aggregate, have come to be known as bourgeois democracy, are not immanent in capitalism and are the result of the working people's struggle and, to a certain extent, also the result of the struggle for power between different segments of the ruling class.

But absolute value is one thing and relative value is another. Lenin showed that capitalism's passage to its last stage is a *turn from democracy to reaction* in the capitalist society's political system. Free competition, he said, is aligned with democracy, while monopoly is aligned with reaction all down the line.

The turn is not due to any psychological factor. It would never occur to anyone to maintain that the exponents of modern monopoly capitalism are by personal qualities more inclined to seek totalitarianism than their precursors of the time of free competition. That is due to the economic conditions of imperialism.

The emergence of monopolies and their undivided economic control reduces practically to nought the chances of other sections of the bourgeoisie in the struggle for power. The state, which as before stands guard over the interests of the capitalist class—over private property and the system of exploitation—becomes an instrument of political domination not for the class as a whole, but only for its upper monopoly echelon, and protects the interests not of the entire class, but only those of its upper monopoly echelon. Ruining the small proprietors and impinging on the middle

bourgeoisie, following a militaristic policy and compelling the nation to go to war again and again in the name of its profits, the monopoly bourgeoisie sets itself against all the other sections of the people. The opportunity thus arises for forming a single anti-monopoly front headed by the working class.

This continuous menace to the monopolies, growing increasingly real as the working class strengthens its organisational unity, pushes monopoly towards reaction. It would, of course, be primitive to think that always and everywhere monopoly wants to establish terrorist regimes. On the contrary, it prefers to rule quietly under the time-honoured canopy of bourgeois democracy, because it knows that reaction is like a boomerang and tends to curtail its own resources. For terrorist dictatorship is an extreme form of power by a class (or part of a class), and has its own logic, requiring iron discipline and certain sacrifices from that class.

Hitler had been a menial of the Krupps and Pfordenges, and sat around humbly in their reception rooms waiting for a handout. But on becoming Chancellor and Führer of the German nation he began lording it over these gentlemen. Fascism is a means of preserving the monopoly echelon as a whole, and of ensuring its prosperity, but it certainly does not guarantee personal safety, much less the independence of members of the clan.

So, as long as monopoly is able to maintain its rule by means of an intricate mechanism of political parties, generous bribes, flirtations with intermediate groups, and the like, it is quite willing to maintain and welcome democratic institutions. But where a political crisis brews and universal suffrage tends to turn against the monopoly lobby in parliament, there the stick is put to use, there attempts are made to pass emergency laws, and to wrench the electoral system out of shape. The success or failure of these attempts depends on the relation of forces, but whatever the case monopoly displays its built-in gravitation towards reaction.

The continuous political struggle within the ruling echelon should also be taken into account. It is a struggle of personal viewpoints on how best to secure the common interest of the class or social group, on the one hand, and a struggle for priority influence in the state, on the other. It is impelled by economic factors—the aims and activity of specific monopoly groups. Naturally, therefore, the gravitation towards reaction is most consistently and most strongly seen among monopolies specialising in the manufacture of arms and in colonial plunder.

What type of political regime is set up where the extreme reactionary and aggressive echelon of imperialists succeeds in

quelling the democratic resistance of the working people? No deep knowledge of theory is needed to answer that question. History has provided the answer. Wherever reaction triumphs, if only temporarily, it takes the form of *one-man dictatorship*. This was the case in Germany and Italy. This was the case in Spain and Portugal. And this is the case today in Chile and certain other capitalist states.

The explanation is found mainly in the nature of the reactionary regime. Any extraordinary form of power requires the strictest possible organisation and discipline of the ruling class if this organisation and discipline are to be carried to the conceivable extreme. The natural culmination of the machinery of government, and the condition for its efficiency and mobility, is a single leader, a leader who holds the keys to the state apparatus and stands above the law inasmuch as he himself defines the aims of the regime and the means of securing them.

But it is not simply a matter of the inner logic of a reactionary political regime. Monopoly cannot realise its gravitation to reaction by simply abolishing democratic institutions. That would yield nothing. On the contrary, it would rally all democratic forces and spur them to action in defence of their rights. The chief objective, in fact, is to *artificially* extend the social base for the rule of the top monopoly echelon.

That is achieved by appealing to the nationalist sentiment of the petty-bourgeois masses, by waving the flag of national and social renewal. And it takes a leader to capture the imagination of the petty bourgeois, to direct his energy in the desired direction and make him support the regime. Best suited for the job is an exalted personality from the midst of those whom it is expected to rally—a shopkeeper, sausage-maker, or a lumpenproletarian. That is how hitlers and rockwells and poujades come on the scene, promising prosperity to the harrassed petty proprietor, turning him against his natural ally, the working class, reconciling him with his natural enemy, the monopolies, and setting him against the Communists, Socialists, democrats, ethnic minorities, foreigners, and so on.

The 'making' of a leader is brilliantly described in H. G. Wells's novel, *The Autocracy of Mr. Parham*, and Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here*. Engels pointed out years ago that Balzac's novels give a better understanding of the French society than any scholarly studies. The above novels produce a masterly picture of the mechanics of 'befuddling the petty-bourgeois masses, and transforming a nonentity into lord and master of the nation's destiny.

In sum, *the tendency towards one-man rule has its roots in the nature of the exploitative society in general, and capitalist society.*

especially in its imperialist stage, in particular. It is the inescapable effect of the social and economic terms on which the exploiting minority dominates the majority, tending to establish extreme forms of totalitarian dictatorship whenever its rule is imperilled. Bonapartism was that form in the period of free competition, and it is fascism in the era of monopoly capitalism.

Bonapartism relied, in substance, on the same social forces as fascism (with allowances for the changes that affected the petty bourgeoisie over the past century). Marx wrote: 'As the executive authority which has made itself an independent power Bonaparte feels it to be his mission to safeguard "bourgeois order"'. But the strength of this bourgeois order lies in the middle class. He looks on himself, therefore, as the representative of the middle class and issues decrees in this sense. Nevertheless, he is somebody solely due to the fact that he has broken the political power of this middle class and daily breaks it anew. Consequently, he looks on himself as the adversary of the political and literary power of the middle class. But by protecting its material power, he generates its political power anew' (Karl Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', in Marx, Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. II, p. 194).

This conclusion leads to another, no less important one: after capitalism becomes fully mature and the economic and political forms of the system crystallise, the social basis of the bourgeois state is bound to shrink, so that there is a gradual curtailment of bourgeois democracy. In a setting where monopoly is economically and politically all-powerful, democratic institutions are less and less able as such to guarantee society against totalitarianism. The guarantees depend increasingly on the organisation of the working people and their readiness to render effective resistance to reaction.

The democratic institutions won by the mass of the people in several centuries of struggle against the exploiters should not be identified with *bourgeois democracy as a whole*. The latter is a form of the dictatorship of capitalists, and when Marxists refer to the possible peaceful road to socialism through parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle, they refer precisely to democratic institutions *used outside and despite the system of bourgeois political rule*. That the new, socialist democracy can germinate within the old, bourgeois democracy, is a formulation, though amorphous, we can still accept. But to maintain, as some Socialists do, that bourgeois democracy as a whole can be a form of transition to socialism is tantamount to divorcing the form from the class content and committing mental rape of reality. Bourgeois democracy is bourgeois use of democratic institutions. Socialist democracy (a democracy exercised by the working people in the interests of the majority and, later, of all society) is socialist use of democratic institutions.

The Communists do not renounce use of democratic institutions simply because the bourgeoisie adapted them to its own purposes. Universal suffrage, representation, executive bodies accountable to elective ones, *habeas corpus*—these and many other democratic institutions are extensively used in the political system of socialism and serve communist construction with ever greater benefit.

At the same time, socialism has created, and continues to create, heretofore unknown forms of democracy and popular rule, giving added scope to the exercise of the social and political rights of the individual fitted to the new social system.

Contrary to what bourgeois theorists would have us believe, it is precisely the new structure of production and society created by the socialist revolution that offers a basis for full-scale and, moreover, factual democracy. And the chief factor behind this is public property in the means of production, for it rules out exploitation of man by man and is the foundation for the true freedom of the individual.

Public property means public management of property. Exercising planned guidance of socialist production and control over the measure of labour and consumption, the state acts in the name, on behalf, and in the interests of the whole people—the collective proprietor of the means of production. This makes the socialised system of organising and managing the economy a premise for effective democracy.

True, to manage socialised property there must be a high degree of centralisation. But it does not follow that this centralisation must necessarily lead to any abuse of power. On the contrary, socialised property means people's control of both production and distribution, of the wealth of society. Consequently, *by its very nature it requires the broadest possible and deepest-going democracy ever known in history*.

Socialism gives rise to conditions for democratising the life of society. It requires democratisation, in fact, as a means of securing the many different aims of communist construction. But democracy cannot be achieved overnight. To build a new system and then to perfect it is no less difficult than to build industry or to carry out a cultural revolution. The making and development of socialist democracy is an objective process that takes a definite amount of time.

It should be remembered that it took a century and a half for bourgeois democracy to reach the form that may be taken as maximal in the capitalist framework.

Time and again, Marx, Engels, and Lenin debunked the utopian



idea that a socialist revolution would at one stroke resolve all the problems facing society. So long as the new social system is in its formative stage, so long as its institutions have not reached mature forms, and so long as new traditions have not taken root in the public consciousness, the vestiges of capitalism, as Lenin put it, or the remnants of the old, surviving in the new,\* would continue to make themselves felt. The tendency to breaching democratic principles, and to authoritarianism, belongs precisely under the head of vestiges. It may gain free play or it may be checked. But it exists, and is the biggest and the most dangerous of all the birth-marks of the past.

Even a cursory study of the economic and social conditions of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism is enough to show that *the tendency of concentrating power has its origins in the past, in capitalism and not socialism.*

In the Soviet Union, as we see it, the personality cult was basically traceable to economic backwardness, and the influence of petty-bourgeois elements and bureaucracy.

And was it not from the past that the country inherited its economic backwardness? Was it not the threat of imperialist aggression that imposed energetic industrialisation which, in turn, required the maximum centralisation? Did not the petty bourgeoisie with its leadership complexes emerge under capitalism, changing gradually under socialism? And was not bureaucracy a tendency shaped by the machinery of government that had prevailed for centuries in the exploitative states, fenced off from the mass of the people, and opposed to the mass of the people—a tendency that takes a long struggle, a restructuring of people's political thinking, to root out?

The bourgeois theorists' inference of authoritarian rule from the nature of socialism is no more true than the disquisitions of Socialists about the 'degeneration' of the Soviet system. Neither stands up to criticism for the simple reason that no degenerate system can *by itself* and, what is more, *from above*, consign its faults to the scrap heap. If a system is degenerate the winds of change come *from below* and lead without fail to some form of political revolution. That, by the way, is what we saw in nineteenth-century France where the great bourgeois revolution was followed by the revolutionary acts of 1830 and 1848, aimed at bringing the new bourgeois order 'up to standard'.

\* See V. I. Lenin, 'The State and Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 471-2.

There was no question of any degeneration of the Soviet system, because the basic pillars of socialism were intact—socialised property and the concomitant socialist economic system. And much more. Despite the breaches of socialist democracy during the period of the personality cult, the general direction of home and foreign policy conformed with the aims of the revolution and paved the way to major success in all fields.

This aspect of the matter was examined in the Resolution of the CC CPSU of 30 June 1956, 'On Overcoming the Cult of the Personality and Its Consequences'.

'It would be a gross mistake,' the Resolution said, 'to infer any changes in the social system of the USSR from the existence in the past of a personality cult or to seek the source of this cult in the nature of the Soviet social system.' The Stalin personality cult, 'could not and did not alter the nature of the socialist state, which reposes on socialised property in the means of production, the worker-peasant alliance, and the friendship of the peoples.... To think that one personality, even so eminent, as that of Stalin, could alter our social and political system is to fall foul of the facts, of Marxism, of the truth, and to yield to idealism. It would mean ascribing to one personality such abnormal, supernatural powers as the ability to change the system of society, and a system at that in which the large mass of the people is the decisive force.'

Socialist Pietro Nenni wrote: 'The dictatorship of the proletariat has resulted in the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party, and that latter in the personal dictatorship of Stalin, which was contrary to the provisions and the recommendations of the founders of socialism' (*Mondo Operaio*, June 1956). That is the formula of degeneration we have dealt with above. But it is senseless, because a one-man dictatorship could never be anything but a form of dictatorship of the ruling class. Here the proletariat is no exception. It would be ridiculous to suggest, would it not, that several million proletarians, let alone tens of millions, should leave their work places and become engrossed in direct, centralised guidance of society.

Surely, the dictatorship of a class is exercised through its organisations, with all its members taking an active part in carrying forward the class policy. And, surely, the elaboration of such policy, as well as the general guidance, is the job of the vanguard of that class, the party and its central leadership. Let me present this long but exceedingly important quotation from Lenin's *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*, which helps to clarify the issue: 'That in the history of revolutionary movements

the dictatorship of individuals was very often the expression, the vehicle, the channel of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes has been shown by the irrefutable experience of history. Undoubtedly, the dictatorship of individuals was compatible with bourgeois democracy. On this point, however, the bourgeois denigrators of the Soviet system, as well as their petty-bourgeois henchmen, always display sleight of hand: on the one hand, they declare the Soviet system to be something absurd, anarchistic and savage, and carefully pass over in silence all our historical examples and theoretical arguments which prove that the Soviets are a higher form of democracy, and what is more, the beginning of a *socialist* form of democracy; on the other hand, they demand of us a higher democracy than bourgeois democracy and say: personal dictatorship is absolutely incompatible with your, Bolshevik (i. e., not bourgeois, but *socialist*), Soviet democracy.

'These are exceedingly poor arguments. If we are not anarchists, we must admit that the state, *that is, coercion*, is necessary for the transition from capitalism to socialism. The form of coercion is determined by the degree of development of the given revolutionary class, and also by special circumstances, such as, for example, the legacy of a long reactionary war and the forms of resistance put up by the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. There is, therefore, absolutely *no* contradiction in principle between Soviet (*that is, socialist*) democracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individuals. The difference between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois dictatorship is that the former strikes at the exploiting minority in the interests of the exploited majority, and that it is exercised—*also through individuals*—not only by the working and exploited people, but also by organisations which are built in such a way as to rouse these people to history-making activity. (The Soviet organisations are organisations of this kind)."

Pay special attention to the fact that the form of compulsion during the transition to socialism depends on the 'degree of development of the revolutionary class' and a set of specific circumstances. In other words, a personal dictatorship as a means of carrying forward the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible, but represents an extraordinary form.

Does it follow that those who were against exposing the personality cult and who saw it as a normal exercise of proletarian dictatorship, were right? No, a thousand times no.

First, because one-man rule is beyond question the worst of all

possible forms of organising government in the conditions of proletarian dictatorship. No matter how outstanding the personality with supreme powers may be, one-man rule is bound to handcuff the initiative and creative independence of the ruling class. It can, therefore, be justified exclusively by *forced circumstances*.

Second, because even the most extraordinary of circumstances cannot justify uncontrolled dictatorial powers, the most trenchant feature of the personality cult being deification of the leader which releases him from the supreme control of the party, and places him above its guiding organs.

Third, because the imperative of socialist legality is relevant even when the situation requires an extreme concentration of power and the severest of measures against the enemies of the revolution. One-man rule is inevitably accompanied with breaches of legality and by a greater or less degree of arbitrary rule.

In sum, attempts at identifying socialism and totalitarianism are absolutely groundless. They are refuted by practice, as well as theory. Practice has shown, in fact, that the establishment of equality and freedom is one of the chief objective laws governing the development of socialist society. It is a different matter that these relations of equality and freedom have not yet attained their final form. Soviet society has reached only the first phase of the communist social formation, while the full solution of the problem of equality and freedom (elimination of classes and provision of all requisite conditions for the all-round development of the individual) will, in substance, become the ultimate indicator that communism in the full meaning of the word has finally been built.

Understandably, the scale of the task gives rise to difficulties of all sorts—both theoretical and practical. In an interview to a TASS correspondent shortly before the 25th Congress of the CPSU adopted the 1976-1980 Soviet economic development plan, a prominent U.S. economist noted the vastness of the consumer needs of the socialist economy, reposing as it does on the principle of equality. It is easy enough to plan an economy that guarantees a high standard of living for the minority, he said. This was done in feudal societies, and even in the Russian empire. It is even easy to provide the majority with a satisfactory level of life. It is much harder, he added, to do this for all people. And that is the problem facing the Soviet planning agencies—and a problem, too, that increasingly occupies the minds of people in capitalist countries. There, as Galbraith notes, it is still a far cry from equality of

\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, pp. 267-8.

consumption, though ethnic factors no longer allow tolerance of a patently lower standard of life for a section of the population (see *Izvestia*, 15 January 1976).

Alongside and closely associated with the problem of satisfying the growing needs of all society, is the far from simple problem of establishing the optimum ratio between the highest and lowest incomes. While conforming with the general tendency of levelling up incomes, it must also retain enough of an incentive for more qualified and productive labour. In effect, the problem has to be tackled anew at each stage, taking into account the new conditions, resources and needs of society.

Certain ideological problems tend to arise, too, because sometimes slogans run ahead of the development of society. The extension of equality is a gradual process. It depends on both the society's level of wealth and on the consciousness of people. Yet, continuous propagation of the idea of equality (in its full sense) without reservations of any sort is liable to create among some people, especially the youth, the impression that society is a kind of guardian who satisfies all needs and wishes.

Socialism has put an end for good to the bitter struggle for survival, which has for millennia been the chief invariant of life, and so remains in capitalist countries today—the source of the law of the jungle that warps the nature of man. But equality does not mean that initiative, perseverance, determination, and the wish to distinguish oneself, to win other people's trust, which are all highly-valuable traits, should become extinct. People must, desirably, apply the maximum energy to gain what they wish at the price of the appropriate contribution to society, that is, in accordance with the socialist principle, 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his work.'

Many other problems arise as the new social relations take shape. And all of them can be resolved, provided the course towards the aims of communism is followed consistently. Soviet experience and that of the other socialist countries leads to the following important conclusions: *first, the amount of equality and freedom increases, steadily with each new historical stage in the development of socialism, and, second, the exercise of these principles is interconnected.*

The contraposition of equality and freedom has been refuted by the most conclusive of arguments—the practice of society.

True, neoconservatives ignore or misinterpret the experience of existing socialism. They prefer to deal with abstract ideas, to manipulate them for their own ends. But the realm of impartial

Logos has its order, and a rigid one. Any encroachments on equality on the excuse of defending freedom does stand up to criticism, even in theory.

Let us take a closer look. Can freedom of the individual exist without equality or equality without freedom of the individual? That depends on what one understands by freedom and equality. If the former is reduced to free will and the latter to equal opportunities, the answer will be affirmative. More, freedom and equality will then, indeed, be incompatible.

The ostentatious and vague reasoning of Dimitries N. Chorafas, of West Germany, reposes on just this approach: 'Only where there is a clear-cut social stratification, and where religious ideas, political convictions and the social order have demarcated the lines between social conditions of life, can freedom prosper within the framework of a class' (*op. cit.*, p. 11). Putting it more simply, to each his own. Let the cream be the cream, and the hoi polloi the hoi polloi. Let them each have their life-style, and let the border between them be inviolable. That, we learn from Chorafas, is the secret of universal happiness: the elite will feel free in its elect circle, and the rabble in its own, and the human spirit will flower. That's something like Plato's aristocratic republic, a hybrid of slavery and capitalism garnished with the achievements of the scientific-technical revolution.

But if you preach undisguised inequality, refrain at least from misguiding people about freedom. How can those who by birth belong to the commonalty ever feel free if they are to bear the cross all their lives? Formerly, they were given the glimmer of the hope of rising above the 'common herd'. Now they are told to abandon that hope, for freedom is attained 'within the framework of a class'.

The working people, who are relegated to the lower class, will never accept this distribution of the boons of life. Neither will those who, with a medium level of life, labour to add to the profits of monopoly in the developed capitalist states, and much less those who are dragging out a wretched existence in the plundered outlands of the capitalist world.

We have already referred to West German sociologist Greiffenhagen. Coming to grips with the conservatives who maintain that equality and well-being for all, i. e., social progress, would lead society into a dead end, he observes that the first thing is to secure freedom from want, and 'this freedom in a mass society can be guaranteed only by the state; it must be planned, and conceived as a composite element of the whole social-economic system.' And Greiffenhagen amplifies: 'In a modern mass society



individual freedom is possible only if and for as long as the state lives up to its duty of providing social security and well-being, and enables its citizens to equally use their chances of self-assertion. Equality creates social scope for the realisation of individual freedom' (*op. cit.*, pp. 59, 60). In sum, you cannot be free if unequal.

Endeavouring to prove the contrary, Daniel Bell maintains that 'the effort to reduce disparities of outcomes means that the liberty of some is qualified or sacrificed in order to make others more equal to them' (Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, Basic Books, New York, 1976, p. 264).

But can people be equal if unfree? Yes, but only if equality is conceived as a wage-levelling [*uravnilovka*]. That's the aim of various petty-bourgeois pseudo-socialist doctrines. In the final analysis, all of them are a reaction of the peasant masses to their lack of rights. But while the taborites of Bohemia, the levellers, and especially the diggers, of England, the babouvistes of France, the narodniks of Russia, and the taipings of China reflected the spontaneous revolutionary mood of the masses, and therefore deserve credit and respect, the various petty-bourgeois concepts that surfaced after the emergence of the theory of scientific communism and the organised revolutionary working-class movement were inevitably reactionary or were actively used by the capitalist class to discredit the cause of socialist revolution.

This was brought home forcefully by the Maoists and especially by the idea of the so-called cultural revolution in China, by the country's conversion into a military camp, a likeness of the model barrack-room headed by the 'great helmsman'. That 'experiment', we can safely say, has fully exposed the futility of petty-bourgeois socialism, and doubly so in its combination with great-power ambitions and the militarist spirit.

On the other hand, bourgeois propaganda has since a long time ago maliciously distorted the Marxist idea of equality, ascribing to Communists an assortment of stupidities like abolition of personal belongings, socialisation of wives, and the like. Engels ridiculed them in *Anti-Dühring*, stressing that for Marxists equality is elimination of classes, nothing more.

There will always be physical, mental and, evidently, moral distinctions between people. And it is certainly not the function of a society based on justice to dampen these distinctions, to make everybody resemble everybody else, like peas in a pod. The task is to create equal conditions for the all-round, harmonious development of the personality. In other words, *while freedom is*

*called upon to be the basis of equality, equality must be the basis of freedom.*

Lenin shows the essence of the matter in this remarkably lucid passage: 'The proletariat needs the abolition of classes—such is the real content of proletarian democracy, of proletarian freedom (freedom from the capitalist, from commodity exchange), of proletarian equality (not equality of classes—that is the banality which the Kautskys, Vanderveldes and MacDonalds slip into—but the equality of the working people who overthrow capital and capitalism).'

And Engels refutes all attempts of the foes of the theory of scientific communism to ascribe to it the intention of levelling society with a flatiron. 'Equal wages for equal work to either sex,' he writes, 'are demanded, as far as I know, by all Socialists so long as wages are not abolished altogether. That the working woman needs special protection against capitalist exploitation because of her special physiological functions seems obvious to me. The English women who championed the formal right of members of their sex to permit themselves to be as thoroughly exploited by the capitalists as the men, are mostly, directly or indirectly, interested in the capitalist exploitation of both sexes. I admit that I am more interested in the health of the future generations than in the absolute formal equality of the sexes during the last years of the capitalist mode of production. It is my conviction that real equality of women and men can become a fact only when the exploitation of either by capital has been abolished and private housework has been transformed into a public industry.'\*

Bourgeois theorists note, and with some justification, that the relatively high standard of living of the mass of the people in the developed capitalist countries has taken the edge off class inequality. The working man who has the modern assortment of blessings (a comfortable home, a car, a paid vacation, and the like) does not, evidently, feel himself as disinherited as did, say, the proletariat in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, he is continuously told that the former inequality has gone, that monopoly has in effect come under the control of society, that private property has become diffused, and so on. In short, need you be bothered if you have a baby Fiat while your neighbour has a chic Mercedes? Both have four wheels.

\* V. I. Lenin, 'The Tasks of the Third International', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 511.

\*\* Engels To Gertrud Guillaume-Schack in Bruehen. London, about July 5, 1885, in Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1975, p. 364.

Despite the tricks of capitalist propaganda which, surely all will admit, strongly affects the public consciousness, no one will ever be able to kill the people's wish to be equal. Take some of the polls held by Western sociologists. Though their techniques nearly always (but in different degrees) tend to distort the true picture, the results speak for themselves.

According to Robert V. Robinson and Wendell Bell, for example, a poll held simultaneously in Britain and the United States yielded the following results: extreme egalitarian supporters totalled 11.9 per cent in Britain and 18.6 per cent in the U.S.A. Close behind them was a large group described as moderately egalitarian—38.6 and 40.7 per cent respectively (*American Sociological Review*, April 1978, p. 128). 'The ideal of equality,' writes Samuel Brittan, a British economist, 'has had a noble role in human history. It has served to assert that all men and women are entitled to respect, and to rally people against oppression. But it has now turned sour.... It could yet be saved if contemporary egalitarianism were to lose its hold over the intelligentsia.'<sup>\*</sup>

No, it is not equality that has turned sour, it is capitalism.

There is only one answer to the question, equality or freedom? And that answer, which the future is sure to bear out, is: equality and freedom.

The dilemmas examined in the previous chapters spring from an artificial contraposition of basic principles of social development. No less relevant for a correct orientation of social progress is the answer to the question posed in the heading of this chapter. This time it concerns two political principles.

As we've already noted, divergent interpretations of basic concepts are a cause of countless misunderstandings. Whether this occurs consciously (I would even say deliberately) or unconsciously (say, due to blind fidelity to traditions obtaining in Western sociology), the results are often highly deplorable. The concept itself tends to limp, leaning left or (more often) right. Besides, polemics becomes pointless.

This has a bearing on the question of pluralism. No other notion has created greater confusion. Not surprisingly, because in the final analysis the concept concerns the structure of the state.

Referring to the question of the state, Lenin observed that it is 'a most complex and difficult one, perhaps one that more than any other has been confused by bourgeois scholars, writers and philosophers' (V. I. Lenin, 'The State', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 470).

To begin with, a few words about the origins of pluralism as a principle of political structure, which was introduced in 1915 by Harold Laski, a British Socialist, to countervail the notion of the 'absolute competence' of the state.

This explanation is essential because previously the word pluralism was used in other contexts, chiefly in philosophy as the antonym of monism.

West German political scientist Hans-Günther Assel says that at present pluralism is understood to apply to the structure of modern, 'industrial society', giving expression to the interests of different groups. The term is used to denote the mechanism of the

<sup>\*</sup> Brittan, 'The Economic Contradictions of Democracy', *British Journal of Political Science*, London, April 1975, p. 159.

state that takes these interests and needs to heart in its acts and policies.\*

For years the term was fairly obscure and did not, in substance, figure in the daily vocabulary of political scientists. Its rise to popularity should evidently be traced to the search for a comprehensive word to counterweigh the principles of socialist democracy and give a favourable picture of what Western sociologists think is the chief adornment of the bourgeois political system. That was how pluralism came into fashion. In recent decades there even appeared new versions of it, 'neopluralism' among others. The latter is meant to connote that in the industrial era democratic society cannot be viable unless plurastic. Also, it is meant to say that pluralism provides not only for the expression of various interests, but also for an equilibrium, or, so to say, concord between the organisations that represent these interests.

Let us see what Social Democrats Alexander and Gesine Schwan, of the FRG, say on this score. The pluralist theory, they write, is becoming the basic guideline of concord and mutual understanding for all those who want a free democratic order in our society and who want to see it develop. Pluralism, they write, is the guarantee that the diversity in modern society of ideological and spiritual trends, social groups and institutions, economic interests and alliances, professional roles and functions, political organisation, parties and instances will be recognised and approved, and that they will have scope for free activity to the extent to which they, for their part, approve and support the state and constitutional order that is necessary for all the plurality of forces to enjoy their rights, and that they will have the protection and opportunity to act in an environment of mutual respect, exchange, competition, and conflict. Consequently, the Schwans go on to say, pluralism faces the as yet unsolved problem of providing for the existence of a free social system and for the growth of social democracy.\*\*

The above shows that some political scientists give the term pluralism a meaning that far transcends the framework of theory and propaganda. For them it is a kind of action programme, and a method of changing reality.

Changing in what way? To believe Assel, the prospects depicted in Johan Galtung's 'Pluralism and the Future of Human Society'

\* Assel, *Demokratischer Sozialpluralismus*, Günter Olzog Verlag, Munich-Vienna, 1975, pp. 37-8.

\*\* See A. and G. Schwan, *Sozialdemokratie und Marxismus*, Hamburg, 1974.

go beyond the 'capitalism-socialism' formula. His view reposes on four models of social arrangement: feudal, liberal, revolutionary, and post-revolutionary. The revolutionary (logically associated with socialism) creates what he calls horizontal collectivism, which renounces exploitation of man by man but compels the individual to accept a definite outlook and way of life, while the post-revolutionary (pluralism) sets itself the goal of ensuring self-determination of the individual and individual freedom. This horizontal-individualistic model would pave the way to 'solidarity in freedom'.

In short, we have here a variant of development pivoted on the combination of individualism and collectivism. That is one way of looking at the development of society, of course. With the reservation, however, that it will inevitably impoverish, and in some things also distort, the underlying aspiration to progress. Because socialist collectivism, in the Marxist-Leninist sense, is not contraposed to normally conceived individualism as a condition for self-expression, giving scope to the individual's creative potential. On the contrary, it provides the sole effective basis for it. Whereas individualism in its bourgeois form—the nihilism of the loner who refuses to abide by the set standards of social behaviour, who extols anarchist arbitrariness and willfulness—is categorically rejected.

In any case Assel's treatment of the term 'pluralism' elevated it to the rank of a sociological theory. But matters did not stop there. The next step was to elevate pluralism to the rank of a universal philosophical system:

'While monism—above all the form that has degenerated into dogmatism—encourages an authoritarian arrangement', writes Helmut F. Spinner (*Pluralismus als Erkenntnismodell*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt, 1974, p. 105), 'the fallibilist-pluralist model of knowledge and action is the germ of humane ethics and of a philosophy of democracy.... Here the antithesis of monism and pluralism becomes a philosophical substantiation of the antithesis of totalitarianism and democracy.'

But let us not follow the enthusiastic admirers of pluralism into the exalted wilderness of philosophy, and confine ourselves to just the political sphere. (The antithesis of pluralism and monism will be dealt with on a broader plane in the next chapter.) Suppose we try, on having summed up the various assessments and characteristics of the concept of pluralism, to set forth its substance more coherently. This is what we'll get:

First, that in modern, so-called industrial, society class struggle as such has been overcome since there are no classes in the imme-



diate sense of the term, any only social strata and groups with specific professional or other interests. They are in a complex state of interaction, and the quality of the social system depends, first of all, on how thoroughly it can provide for the free self-expression of group interests and for their representation before the state. The state is conceived as an organisation that maintains peace and order and that does not allow separate social strata to put their interests above those of others, much less a free-for-all which may enable the majority or the minority to impose the order of its choice.

Second, the state's political decisions are the result of the interaction of political forces, their 'free play' through the use of the rights granted to citizens by the electoral law, the right to form political parties, to work through various public organisations or 'pressure groups', and to express views by virtue of the freedom of the press, assembly, and other political liberties.

True, the difference in approach to the regulation of the outcome of the 'free play' of political forces is of considerable relevance. Bourgeois-liberal exponents of pluralism are for complete 'impartiality', with no obstacles of any sort to any of the groups seeking to secure their interests. This bid for unlimited freedom betrays the understandable wish of the capitalist to avail himself of his economic power to secure political power. British writer Maitland sees the state as a federation of self-governing and harmoniously coexisting groups. It must not, he holds, impose its will on any other organisations. The same is preached by exponents of 'absolute pluralism', who see the state as a kind of arbiter, not a participant with the final say in any debate.

Another group of pluralists, chiefly associated with the left and with advocates of social reformism, holds that while providing for the free play of political forces, the state must not permit any separate groups to predominate. In other words, it is to be a referee between the ruling and opposition forces, and should not let the former 'hurt' the latter.

According to political scientist A. H. Birch, a government 'must continually be arranging compromises between the conflicting demands of sections of the public' (Birch, *Representative and Responsible Government*, University of Toronto Press, 1964, p. 21).

A further pluralist improvement is inferred of the political and social system of the developed capitalist countries: the freedom of the strong and established interest groups is to be so restricted as to prevent them from 'violating the social and ecological symmetry and jeopardising the "solidarity in freedom"' (Assel, *op. cit.*, p.

212). That, indeed, is the limit of socialisation that infuses the left 'pluralists' with pride in being 'great revolutionists'.

While the more sober supporters of pluralism see the need for improving the Western system, some bourgeois theorists maintain that capitalist governments had at no time represented just one elite, and had always mediated all the elites, always seeking to reconcile the conflicting interests of all groups. Hence, "political government had been pluralistic" (see Tom Kemp, *Theories of Imperialism*, Dennis Dobson, London, 1967).

The boundary between the 'absolute' and 'moderate' pluralists is relatively vague. Everything depends on how the basic notion is interpreted. Laski, for example, held that the bourgeois state ought to be neutralised because it was the instrument of the economically dominant class. But setting aside the motives, his conclusion was no different from the slogan of the liberals.

'Absolute pluralism' has been a target of technocratic criticism. U. S. sociologist Henry S. Kariel faults the pluralists for their idealistic and simplistic approach to the intricacies of social life. He writes that the U. S. pluralism had proved 'twofold', with 'a tremendously complex governmental apparatus—diffuse, unintegrated, centrifugal', on the one hand, and 'a prodigious cluster of innumerable groups buoyantly, chaotically seeking to achieve privately and voluntarily what we have forbidden ourselves to do publicly'.\* French political scientist Julien Freund put this still more bluntly: 'The diffusion to which political pluralism leads is incompatible with the unity and hierarchy without which no state can be viable.'\*\*

Whatever version of pluralism we may take as a model, one thing is clear: if it is right, then capitalist society has radically changed and is, at least in the political context, a model of democracy. Whereupon there follows the next step. Having accepted that the bourgeois state is no longer in the class context a bourgeois state, we have to accept that it has become a guardian of the interests of the whole society.

All this is hardly worth the trouble to refute. The one fact that, far from having gone off the scene, the ruling monopoly elite in the modern capitalist states, a handful of people holding control of a gigantic share of the social wealth, has augmented its power, shows how groundless are the theories of the so-called diffusion of classes.

\* Kariel, *The Decline of American Pluralism*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 1961, p. 253.

\*\* Freund, *L'Essence du politique*, Editions Sirey, Paris, 1963, p. 212.

Monopoly can preserve and multiply its wealth only so long as it controls the levers of political power. The existence of large-scale private property is the most dependable and true indicator that society is ruled by capital.

West German political scientist W. Weber defined the political system in the FRG as a pluralism of the oligarchic ruling groups (see Weber, *Spannung und Kraft im Westdeutschen Verfassungssystem*, West Berlin, 1958).

No new quality has evolved to justify a search for a new definition of bourgeois statehood. The propaganda noises and the theorising are mainly speculative. They are like an attempt at turning the building at an angle that would let the spectator see nothing but the dressed-up front.

That front consists of two basic elements. First, the division into antagonistic classes that capitalism cannot avoid, and hence the existence of conflicting political forces—conservative and reactionary on one side, revolutionary and democratic on the other. The capitalist class would be glad to wipe out the hostile class, but cannot because it must have a working class. Where the revolutionary party had ever been totally and physically exterminated, it never failed to rise again from the ashes and begin a new cycle of struggle. Consequently, in the capitalist environment pluralism reposes (at least partly) on objective social premises independent of the will of the ruling class. It is a necessity paraded in all the advertising it gets as a virtue.

The other element of the 'pluralist system' is that the ruling class and the contiguous strata break up unavoidably into diverse social groups scrambling for a share of the pie, for the many different advantages and privileges one obtains by influencing the country's home and foreign policy.

It is not always easy to distinguish between the two main 'segments' of pluralism. There can be thousands of different marginal effects and thousands of different forms of reciprocal penetration, so that they cannot usually be arranged in the familiar pattern. It is quite impossible, for example, to classify some of the political organisations (or pressure groups) representing the intermediate social strata on the borderline between the working class and the bourgeoisie. While largely relating radical improvement of their condition to the programme of revolutionary change, they are not disinclined, for the moment, to bargain for privileges in the framework of the still existing system.

Another example is the tactical collaboration for some specific aim of political groups of different class origin and with different programmes. The life of a bourgeois state abounds in facts of that sort. And behind this intricate and diverse movement of political practice, behind this tactical scrimmaging, the observer (at least the superficial observer) loses sight of the fundamental boundary that divides the two main elements of bourgeois statehood, coming away with an impression of total democracy that allows for the really free play of political forces.

Yet even the window-dressed front of the present-day, mature, even over-ripe bourgeois democracy is full of rents and fissures. The 'free' play of political forces follows very rigid rules that guarantee the absolute inviolability of the system's holy of holies—the power of capital. It may be described as a roulette in which the players are forbidden to break the bank, in which some may lay limited stakes, and others are not even allowed close to the gaming table.

That was how things once stood for the Socialists, and how they now stand for the Communists. They are outside the pluralist pale. Before joining in the 'free' game they are expected to tender a certificate of 'loyalty'.

Recall the commotion in the bourgeois camp a few years ago over the possible participation of the Italian Communist Party in government. Threats issued from Washington, and warnings from Bonn and London. Least concerned about upsetting the harmonious constructions of the pluralist theoreticians, Western political leaders are still discussing whether Communists may be 'admitted' to government or whether they must first offer additional 'assurances', not short of giving up their name 'Communists'. (That was suggested by Bruno Kreisky.) Those who think communist participation in government is tolerable, make this reservation: Communists must not be ministers of internal affairs, defence, foreign affairs, or finance. In other words, they must be kept out of all key posts, where the bourgeoisie refuses to tolerate dissenters. Of late, with the role of public opinion having grown immeasurably, agencies controlling the mass media are also listed among the key, sensitive organs.

The paradoxical contradiction between the principles of pluralism and the conditions set to the Communists is shown in an article by Marcel Zaidner, which appeared in *Les Cahiers du Communisme*, a French communist journal. 'In the present conditions,' he wrote, 'we should ask ourselves if our adversaries, and perhaps our allies too, are prepared to accept all the conse-

quences of political pluralism. To prove our attachment to the concept of a pluralist democracy, we should have to modify our political activity, as we also should our organisation, and renounce the concept of a workers' party of a new type. To do so would be to commit a fundamental absurdity: we would have to stop being ourselves to render possible our collaboration with others.' And Zaidner added: 'For other parties to accept the pluralist principle is to accept the communist party such as it is. The success of the communist concept of pluralism ... requires that the revolutionary party of the working class should invariably retain and develop its inherent qualities. Besides, without an influential communist party there is no pluralism or rather there is only a pretence at pluralism, one that removes the working class from active involvement in the country's political life or one that reduces its ability to participate in it' (*Les Cahiers du Communisme*, May 1975).

Referring to the above, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, leader of the left wing of the French Socialist Party, complained that the Communist Party thereby tried to justify its 'distinct existence'. He saw inconsistency in Zaidner's standpoint. But is there an inconsistency? If pluralism implies the participation of all forces in the political process, if it implies all possible creeds, is there any justifiable ground to require that one of the forces, moreover one that is followed by nearly one-quarter of the country's electors, should alter its beliefs for the sake of 'access' to political activity?

True, the logic of the ideological struggle against the rightist foes of socialism brings Chevènement to the correct conclusions, for in the end he exclaims: 'Pluralism! What crimes and turmoil are being prepared in thy name!' He is outraged by the fact that rightists set criteria of 'loyalty' for parties to qualify for the political game. For them to have it their way, only 'respectable' people may share in the feast of 'French democracy'. In other words, says Chevènement, the rightists have in advance hauled out the old slogan, 'no liberty for the enemies of liberty', to disguise their own criminal acts.\*

In addition, the bourgeoisie has a second 'strategic line' of defence—the state apparatus. In this peculiar three-layered cake, where the lower echelon may for all intents and purposes be identified in social origin and psychological mood with skilled workers and salary-earners, and where the upper layer is the leadership of

the political party that had won the elections, the centre of gravity is in the middle layer. This changeless bureaucratic elite recruited from among the 'flower' of the ruling class, the career people with substantial professional training and a class education (received, in Britain's case, at Eton, Oxford, Cambridge), is the chief guardian of capitalist power.

In an article entitled, 'Who Governs France?', Michele Cotta shows that the decisive role in the governmental mechanism is played by the caste of 'high officials', the fledglings of E. N. A., the National School of Administration. Forty per cent of the staff of ministries come from E.N.A., so do 90 per cent of all government officials. E.N.A. graduates are of the aristocracy, the big bourgeoisie, and one-third of the families of high officials. Less than one per cent are of working-class background. High officials, the people who control economic, financial and political information, the writer says, are not inclined to give it to third persons, even ministers, much less to parliament deputies, regardless of their belonging to the majority or the opposition. The information, which Pierre Mendes France described as 'material indispensable for modern democracy', is kept by them for personal use or for the use of the power that employs them, by definition the party in power (*L'Express*, 24-30 July 1972).

One more trustworthy comment, Jean-François Revel writes that national representative bodies do not control the executive power, invisible and omnipresent. 'Not the deputy, not local elective organs, not the ministers concerned, not the prime minister, and not even the head of state,' he writes, 'can do much to an administration that is neither elected nor punishable' (*L'Express*, 27 Dec. 1976-3 Jan. 1977).

Lenin wrote: 'The entire history of the bourgeois-parliamentary, and also, to a considerable extent, of the bourgeois-constitutional, countries shows that a change of ministers means very little, for the real work of administration is in the hands of an enormous army of officials. This army, however, is undemocratic through and through, it is connected by thousands and millions of threads with the landowners and the bourgeoisie and is completely dependent on them... This army is bound by servility to rank, by certain privileges of 'Civil' Service; the upper ranks of the army are, through the medium of shares and banks, entirely enslaved by finance capital, being to a certain extent its agent and a vehicle of its interest and influence.'\*

\* Chevènement, *Les Socialistes, les Communistes et les autres*, Aubier, Paris, 1977, pp. 43, 349, 350.

\* V. I. Lenin, 'One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 368-9.



More than half a century has passed since these lines were written. And if anything has changed, it is the volume of the 'privileges of civil service'. Corruption among bourgeois officials has grown to proportions their grandfathers did not dream of (recall the Lockheed bribes to officials in nearly all Western governments).

West German writer Markus observes that ministers vested with political responsibilities spend most of their time in playing up to the public, while vital governmental problems are increasingly concentrated in the hands of officials, who, moreover, possess the specialised training the ministers lack. We're in for it, he writes, if officials of the executive write the laws, officials of the legislature endorse them, officials of the executive get them back and carry them out, and officials of the judiciary see that they are enforced.\*

Needless to say, the bureaucracy, which is sensitive to the interests of its class, gets along swimmingly with the minister who comes from the same milieu, sneers down at the bourgeois liberal or right-wing socialist, and can most effectively hamstring anyone whom it considers an 'outsider' impinging on the established and time-honoured political order. Given these all but foolproof guarantees, the bourgeoisie can afford pluralism. Doubly so, because in an emergency it can always resort to the most conclusive argument of all—teargas, bayonets, machine-guns.

Summing up, the attempts to pass off pluralism as the ideal political model (at least as the ideal decision-making mechanism) are untenable for the following basic reasons.

Any 'free play' of political forces implies not conciliation of different interests, but that some interests are superseded by others. Might is right. A principle that is not worthy of the community of *homo sapiens*. It is the law of the jungle, a modern version of Hobbs's formula, *bellum omnium contra omnes*. The premise of a system in which people cannot expect to have their interests met other than by means of group egoism, encourages artificial growth of the corporate spirit. In other words, the intention is to make inter-group scrimmaging, in which the economically strongest group, monopoly capital, will invariably have the last say, the ultimate principle of social relations.

Some Western sociologists see this principle as a boon. 'Democracy,' writes U. S. professor Alfred McClung Lee, 'is a philosophy of social organization and participation that maximizes tolerance toward, and benefits from

internecine disagreements, competitions, and struggles, even conflicts' (Lee, *Toward Humanist Sociology*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1973, p. 101). What, I wonder, can the benefit be? Surely, the *demos* is doomed to continual defeats by this philosophy of 'tolerance'.

Further, inasmuch as rivalry cannot guarantee fair consideration of interests, the social problems are bound to grow more acute. The objective reasons for the disparity of interest are compounded with the defeated party's sourness over the results of the latest round of the struggle, and in the case of those who lose regularly, they are, as a rule, compounded with despair and alienation. That is exactly the feeling of the groups that cannot safeguard even their livelihood.

Western sociologists and political scientists are compelled to admit the aggravation of so-called marginal problems—the dire plight of the various social groups that (at best) get only the left-overs from the feast of progress and are doomed to vegetate in poverty (racial and ethnic minorities, the labour force in abandoned or unindustrialised areas, the landless in rural areas, and so on).

The consequences of the competitive political model are liable to be still more negative in the case of long-term national needs. Keeping control of the main levers of government, the monopolies naturally suit the solution of all general problems to their own benefit. Through bourgeois-democratic procedure this benefit is concealed behind the national flag, with a considerable segment of society thus being prevailed upon, for example, that the arms race is essential to make the country safe from the 'communist peril'.

Lastly, political rivalry cannot resolve the problem of majority and minority, of which Western scholars write so prolifically. By the nature of bourgeois parliamentarism, after all, the opposition can do no more than criticise the government, and the latter is not at all obliged to take its demands into account, let alone consider the interests of the classes and social groups it represents.

Western sociologist Joseph A. Schumpeter, who had once predicted that capitalism would be destroyed by 'its own accomplishments', defined democracy as an 'institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote'.\* This is a clear enough definition of the purpose behind pluralism, where political decision-making is seen as a sphere of rivalry, with some winning and others losing.

Let us see if there is merit to the struggle of various political

\* See H. Markus, *Die faule Gesellschaft. Wie die Deutschen arbeiten*, Düsseldorf, 1974, p. 94.

\* Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Third Edition, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1950, p. 269.

parties and currents in the framework of bourgeois-democratic legality? Haven't revolutionary forces, too, gained certain benefits in this framework?

To say that pluralism has no positive content at all is to follow in the footsteps of the extreme 'left', who are colour-blind and see no differences of shade or hue. The founders of Marxism showed the hypocrisy and limitations of bourgeois democracy in absolute terms, and its progressive implications in relative terms. This evaluation also counts for political pluralism, which is a principle of bourgeois-democratic statehood in the era of over-ripe capitalism.

In other words, political pluralism may be justifiably considered one of the democratic forms that, like universal suffrage, freedom of the press, and publicity, was won by the mass of the people in centuries of struggle for their interests. In the capitalist setting, however, it is inevitably limited and in many ways false. Using it in the interests of the working people presupposes persevering struggle for a fuller and more real application of the pluralist principle in practical politics.

The trouble is that bourgeois political scientists try to portray pluralism as something that it is not—not as one of the principles (or forms) of the democratic political structure but as an integral model of a political system that has gained full scope in developed capitalist states and is in general an exemplary model of statehood.

The ideological overtones of this approach are obvious, because its proponents are less concerned about how the model could be applied more effectively in the capitalist environment, and more about how to prove its superiority to democratic centralism. More, democratic centralism is said to be unavoidably associated with 'totalitarianism' and hence unacceptable, while pluralism is taken beyond the boundaries of the capitalist system and declared the ideal form for 'democratic socialism'.

By democratic centralism Marxism-Leninism understands a principle that is at the root of the organisational structure of the communist party, the state and, in substance, the entire socialist political system. In the narrow sense, it is a decision-making mechanism in the setting of socialist statehood and democracy.

Any power-related principle (and decision-making is the quintessence of power, its supreme function) cannot be correctly understood and impartially evaluated unless it is taken in association with the social base. Without this any discussion of its content is meaningless blather. And the social base of democratic centralism is developed socialist society. This does not go to say

that the principle is inapplicable in other conditions—in the early stages of building socialism or during the period of revolutionary transition. But the more mature socialist social relations enhance the effect of democratic centralism, and hence allow for a fuller appreciation of its advantages.

The above applies to the state only. In the case of working-class parties, democratic centralism is their organisational principle in capitalist conditions as well.

There are two basic characteristics of the social structure that predetermine decision-making, control, and other elements of administrative procedure on the basis of democratic centralism. The first is the *identity of the basic interests* of all classes and strata of the population. The second is the *diversity of the specific interests* of different social groups. The first stems from the abolition of private property (the exploiting classes) and consequently of class antagonisms, and is evidence of tremendous progress as compared with capitalism. The second is due essentially—and I say *essentially* because the differentiation of interests is not always social—to the surviving distinctions (between workers, peasants, and intellectuals, between groups within one social class, between workers by hand and by brain, between urban and rural workers, etc.). It reflects the relatively incomplete development of socialism as compared with the higher phase, communism.

The specific interests survive because full equality is not yet secured under socialism (that is, classless society is not yet formed).

I may be told that this admission of social distinctions is tantamount to admitting the 'stratification' of socialist society. Let me say at once that the expression as such does not upset me. How to call the part of society that has a common specific interest—group, segment, or stratum—does not really matter. What I object to is not the term but the conclusion drawn from the stratification concept—that the existence of divergent interests makes continuous struggle inevitable and that the state is chiefly engaged in keeping that struggle within the prescribed and regulated bounds. That is like applying the old scheme to the new society and taking it back to pre-revolution times.

But why not assume that in a society without class antagonisms contradictions can, among other things, be regulated through competition between different social strata and between their political organisations? Certainly, the assumption is possible, above all because progress does not always follow the optimum

path and often hews its way forward by means of bizarre political forms emerging from the vortex of the class struggle.

But the whims of history are one thing, and the conscious and science-based choice of the best solution in all fields of society and in the state structure is another. In the latter case, democratic centralism is preferable. Because, for one thing, it accords with the economic and social structure of socialist society. Next, it provides for highly effective functioning of the political system. Finally, it envisages regulation of objective contradictions through co-operation, not competition.

That, indeed, is the chief advantage of democratic centralism. The socialist political system harmonises the common interests of the people with the interests of the classes and social strata; compares, agrees and satisfies, rather than contraposes, the diverse specific interests within the frame of a single policy; combines society's need for centralised guidance with the need for the maximum initiative, self-expression and self-administration of the various cells (local government, enterprises, staff collectives, and so on).

Lenin wrote: "Centralism, understood in a truly democratic sense, presupposes the possibility, created for the first time in history, of a full and unhampered development not only of specific local features, but also of local inventiveness, local initiative, of diverse ways, methods and means of progress to the common goal."<sup>\*</sup>

Now about the practical or institutional aspect of the matter. From the outset, the socialist political system worked on the principle of expressing both the common and specific interests. From the day of the October Revolution and throughout the formative period of the socialist state there emerged and developed a broad, ramified system of organs and organisations, notably the Soviets of people's deputies, bodies of national statehood and autonomy, trade unions, the Young Communist League, collective farms, women's organisations, art unions, and various other societies and associations. Safeguarding and furthering their interests is the prime condition for truly democratic decision-making. Besides, and this is still more important, there is an organisation that agrees or co-ordinates the diverse needs of the chief classes and social strata within the bounds of one policy, based on the coinciding basic needs of the society as it advances

<sup>\*</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Original Version of the Article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 208.

to communism. This function is performed by the Communist Party, which expresses the aspirations and hopes of all working people and which is the political force and authoritative vanguard that unites and cements society.

The Party's role is important and responsible at all stages of revolutionary development and of the struggle for the victory of socialism. The scale of the tasks it tackles increases at each new stage, and most of all in the period of developed socialist society. The growth of the Party's role is impelled by the differentiation and extension of the content of all areas of life, and the proliferation of means and forms of the people's participation in running the state. Contrary to bourgeois propaganda, the development of the socialist states shows that at each new stage, and especially after socialism reaches maturity, the life of society grows richer, with people being more actively involved in economy, politics, culture, and so on. As stressed by Leonid Brezhnev, 'socialist democracy ensures a sensitive response to the growing diversity of social interests and opens up a broad field for the initiative and socio-political activity of the masses' (*World Marxist Review*, December 1977).

In those socialist countries where a multi-party system has taken shape historically, the democratic parties express definite social interests. Under the guidance of the Communist Party, they participate in co-ordinating these interests with the common interests of the whole people.

Need it be said that political decision-making which must co-ordinate the long-term objectives of communist construction with the current needs of society is a difficult thing. The country's financial and material resources cannot meet all needs at once. This entails selection. Some interests get priority over others. In the capitalist environment that sort of thing is settled by political struggle, pressure, deceit of the public, bribery, corruption, and the like. In socialist conditions the various interests and viewpoints are compared and weighed, and the most urgent and justified ones are given precedence.

Certain liberal bourgeois critics of the modern capitalist political system note that bourgeois democracy is about to collapse, and see salvation in some method of consolidating the political forces and securing their co-operation. No longer is this a propaganda slogan of 'labour-capital harmony' but a sincere belief that the system cannot be saved in any other way.

But the attempts to get harmony and still keep class privileges are in vain. And take note that here the ideal offered us is, in effect,



the same kind of mechanism as that of the socialist democracy which is being contraposed by pluralism.

What, then, prevents the theorists of the progressive school from taking the last logical step and recognising the superiority of democratic centralism over pluralism? The barrier they've created for themselves is the already mentioned identification of the socialist political system with totalitarianism. I have argued in the previous chapter that there are no grounds for identifying socialism with totalitarianism, that the latter is rooted in the pre-socialist economic and social structure. Taking the matter one step further, I now want to ask: what guarantees does bourgeois democracy, whether pluralistic or not, offer against its own principles being violated? Parliamentarism did not prevent Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, and Salazar from establishing their fascist terrorist regimes. Division of power proved no obstacle to the thugs of Pinochet. The existence of a Supreme Court in the United States, where it has special powers of control, did not stop the rape of human rights in the McCarthyist period, nor does a similar body in the FRG react against the obviously unconstitutional *Berufsverbote*.

In sum, democratic institutions as such cannot prevent violation of principles unless there is an impressive enough political and social force behind them. Traditions do, undeniably, play their part, evolving into a kind of democratic ritual that it is not easy to breach. But that is not the main thing. When a situation is really serious, and when the fragile bonds of democracy are 'overstretched', with the ruling bourgeois class strongly tempted to scrap rule of law and do away with dissidents by main force—at times like that only the organised working-class and democratic movement can stay its hand. Consequently, whether or not democratic principles are adhered to in the capitalist environment depends, in the final analysis, on the relation of class forces.

Replying to the same question, whether democratic principles can be violated in a socialist society, we must first of all set apart the things which the adversaries of Marxism declare 'undemocratic' (from the bourgeois angle) but which are wholly in keeping with the socialist idea of the purpose of democracy—serve the interests of the working people. For a bourgeois any restriction of free enterprise, for example, is an 'infracture of democracy'. The communist viewpoint is completely the reverse.

The matter is put very nicely in general terms by prominent Bulgarian philosopher N. Iribadjakov. 'Centralism is the antipode not of democracy but of unlimited centralisation.... There may be

no strong, effective and authoritarian central power, yet local authorities may be highly independent in making their decisions. But this does not mean that democracy prevails. And conversely, a strong and highly authoritarian central power may be wholly democratic. The democratic nature of the state depends, therefore, not on whether it is centralised or not centralised, but chiefly on its planned character, on whether the central and local bodies of power are in the hands of the people and exercise the people's will and interests, and on whether the mass of the people participate in the work of these bodies and keep them under their control.\*

The above concerns democratic centralism as practised by central and local bodies of authority. It can easily be extended to apply to all other fields of political relations. In the most general of terms we could say that *democratic centralism is the optimum combination of the interests of the whole and its parts, of society and the individual, of the state and the citizen, of the centre and the periphery, and so on.*

A concept no matter how complex, is best illustrated by comparison. 'We are for democratic centralism,' Lenin wrote. 'And it must be clearly understood how vastly different democratic centralism is from bureaucratic centralism on the one hand, and from anarchism, on the other.'\*\*

The founder of the Soviet state called again and again for the strictest possible observance of the principle of democratic centralism, warning against its 'distortion' and over-emphasis of one of its elements. Bureaucratic centralisation, as he put it, was 'one of the greatest obstacles to economic and political development in general, and an obstacle to *centralism* in serious, important and fundamental matters in particular'.\*\*\*

Yet what its critics make of democratic centralism could apply only to the most untenable kind of bureaucratic centralism. This simplistic substitution of one for the other enables them to rail at 'communist totalitarianism', and solicit for the 'pluralist model'.

The substitution is buttressed with references to Max Weber's bureaucratisation theory. Italian Social Democrat Norberto Bobbio, for example, discovered a paradox of the following order: 'The processes of democratisation and bureaucratisation develop

\* *Present Problems and Outlook of Socialist Democracy*, Peace and Socialism Publishers, Prague, 1975, pp. 133-4.

\*\* V. I. Lenin, 'Original Version of the Article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 207.

\*\*\* V. I. Lenin, 'Critical Remarks on the National Question', *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 47.

simultaneously and uniformly, with the latter being the direct effect of the former. In fact, the more socialism there is, the more bureaucracy there is' (*Mondo operaio*, No. 10, 1975).

The main cause of bureaucratisation, says Bobbio, is the expanding scale and greater intricacy of the functions of the 'modern state'. In other words, the malaise has not spared capitalism either. But why are its effects graver under socialism? The answer is one more paradox 'discovered' by Bobbio. Problems needing a technical solution are proliferating, he says, which means that more highly qualified specialists must be called in. In the circumstances, greater democracy is tantamount to participation of incompetents in the making of decisions or, as the Italian Social Democrat puts it, to 'massification'. The conclusions are obvious: since socialism endows the state with broader functions than capitalism, it needs a larger bureaucracy, and since it enlists the masses in administration, this bureaucracy is, moreover, incompetent.

By means of these and similar arguments borrowed from capitalist sociologists, Social Democrats turn people, and themselves too, against socialism. But their arguments are built on a distortion of the sense of fundamental political phenomena, on irrational logic, on particular facts raised to an absolute, and on reluctance and inability to see the historical perspective.

Let us try and handle the matter more consequentially. To begin with, the concept of bureaucracy does not stand for an inflated apparatus of officials. That is just the outward attribute, while the essential attribute or caste egoism, meaning that a government position is considered a cushy job, with the interests of the cause taking a back seat to the interests of the individual's career.

The chief danger of bureaucracy is that it puts state policy second to its own interests. But the nature of socialism has a most effective antidote—the universality of the principle of payment according to work, the inevitable limitation of personal wealth, and the impossibility of using it as a means of acquiring power. Yet precisely wealth is the nutritive medium of bureaucracy in capitalist society: riches give power, and power multiplies riches.

Distribution according to work, the high degree of social equality reached already in the first phase of the communist system, social mobility, the favourable conditions afforded to all for the development and use of their gifts, and, as a consequence, for promotion to higher positions in the state apparatus or any other sphere of activity—these and many other features of the social, economic and political system prevent the emergence of a

permanent elite in socialist society. The chief condition for bureaucracy to flourish, and therefore the condition for its existence—that of reproducing and perpetuating itself in subsequent generations in order to feel secure—is lacking in socialist society.

The social mechanism of socialist society also has safeguards against the development of a, so to say, one-generation bureaucracy. Those include the truly democratic structure of the political system, providing for the participation of millions of working people—factory people, farmers, researchers—in the work of the Soviets, the Communist Party, and trade union, Komsomol, and other public organisations. There is also the safeguard of criticism, which has always been one of the key principles of the Soviet system, and is now enshrined in the USSR Constitution.

Article 49 of the 1977 Constitution of the USSR says: 'Every citizen of the USSR has the right to submit proposals to state bodies and public organisations for improving their activity, and to criticise shortcomings in their work.'

'Officials are obliged, within established time-limits, to examine citizens' proposals and requests, to reply to them, and to take appropriate action.'

'Persecution for criticism is prohibited. Persons guilty of such persecution shall be called to account.'

One more safeguard is the all-embracing organisation of people's control, which has also been secured in the Constitution (see *Constitution of the USSR*, Article 22).

Australian political scientist L. G. Churchward, who devoted many years to studying socialism, classes as a specific feature of the Soviet state 'mass or public participation in the actual process of government', stressing that it means much more than the participation of a majority of citizens in the elections as happens in most parliamentary states.\*

David Lane, professor at Cambridge, holds, too, that absence of private property in the USSR offers greater opportunities than in the West for the people's participation in political life.\*\*

And one more testimonial. Ronald J. Hill, a British political scientist, made a special study in the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, and arrived at these conclusions: 'a high level of turnover helps to draw a wide circle of citizens into the process of local administration'; 'the general level of civic awareness is thereby raised'; 'it is not a closed system'; 'I remarked on the practice ... of

\* Churchward, *Contemporary Soviet Government*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1975, p. 9.

\*\* See Lane, *The Socialist Industrial State*, London, 1974.

extending meetings of both party and state organs to a wide circle of non-members, who not only attended, but also participated.\*

These appraisals are a sign of the times. They show that these days an impartial scholar taking a first-hand look at things in socialist society renounces the clichés of bourgeois propaganda.

True, few Sovietologists are willing and able to be impartial. Most of them prefer to overlook the mass participation of Soviet citizens in the affairs of the socialist state. Some even manage to portray this obvious virtue as a vice.

Mass participation on decision-making and control has no negative effect. It does not depress the quality, level or competence of administration, as Bobbio would have us believe. Participation has nothing in common with any primitive interference of incompetents in fields requiring specialised training. That is just the point: democratic centralism rules out arbitrary decisions as it does anarchy.

Here is Lenin's classic formula, which explains how the need for specialisation is reconciled with the need for democratising administration:

The democratic principle of organisation...implies that every representative of the masses, every citizen, must be put in such conditions that he can participate in the discussion of state laws, in the choice of his representatives and in the implementation of state laws. But it does not at all follow from this that we shall permit the slightest chaos or disorder as regards who is responsible in each individual case for definite executive functions, for carrying out definite orders, for controlling a definite joint labour process during a certain period of time. The masses must have the right to choose responsible leaders for themselves. They must have the right to replace them, the right to know and check each smallest step of their activity. They must have the right to put forward any worker without exception for administrative functions. But this does not at all mean that the process of collective labour can remain without definite leadership, without precisely establishing the responsibility of the person in charge, without the strictest order created by the single will of that person.\*\*

Let me stress that the above is the only possible solution to one of

\* Hill, *Soviet Political Elites*, Martin Robertson & Company, London, 1977, pp. 171, 174, 183.

\*\* V. I. Lenin, 'Original Version of the Article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 212.

the most complex problems of social development, which has been thoroughly confused by bourgeois and reformist theoreticians who (in fear or with pleasure) announce the coming of the technocratic era. With faith in Marxist-Leninist theory and in the experience of socialist society, I can say that era will never come. What will come is socialist democracy that provides for the optimum balance of competent administration by specialists and constant control over what they do by the mass of the people who, with a high degree of political knowledge and tradition, take an active part in making the basic decisions.

Consequently, the thing amounts to finding that optimum balance of the two principles. How difficult this is may be illustrated by the fact that capitalism took a century and a half to finalise its economic and political structures (of course, within the class system and the possibilities inherent in it).

Though in contrast to capitalist society, the social and political development of socialism proceeds on a scientific basis, the search for optimum principles and institutions relies largely on experimentation and the objective progress of social practice. And at the phase when the new system is still in its formative stage, when there are no tested models and landmarks and only scientific assumptions, the job is still more complicated.

Bear in mind, furthermore, that the search proceeds not in the sterile setting of a laboratory, where one solution after another may be methodically verified, but in the environment of intensive social activity. Improvements in the model of administration are introduced while society is engaged in stepping up production. And that is just as difficult as improving, say, the design of a motor car while it is being accelerated.

It will be recalled, furthermore, that so far socialism has had a negligibly short period that was favourable for progress. The civil war and the imperialist intervention of the early twenties, the threat and imminence of foreign aggression in the thirties, the severe class struggle inside the country, the titanic ordeal of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, and the cold war that followed World War II—all this had a natural effect on the political system, causing the over-emphasis on centralism.

The road of the other socialist countries has been relatively short, too, and almost as complicated.

The fact that despite all these difficulties, socialism's political and economic system secured tremendous all-round economic and cultural progress is vivid evidence of its inordinate powers. It is patently obvious, moreover, that its resources have only been



tapped so far. In recent years, the Soviet Communist Party and the communist and workers' parties of the other socialist countries have made it their central task to further improve the political system and to further develop socialist democracy.

Obviously, success in this undertaking will have a strong bearing on the rate of the revolutionary process as a whole. The more rapidly the optimum socialist model of administration and economy crystallises, the greater will be the achievements of socialism and the greater the impact of its example.

The ideological polemics in the West these days centred chiefly on democratic centralism as the structural principle of communist and workers' parties. Conservatives and Social Democrats alike make this categorical demand: if Communists want to be admitted to the 'pluralist game' they must abdicate that principle, which, they say, contains the seeds of totalitarianism.

The standpoint of the Italian Communists on this score has been put by Enrico Berlinguer in the following terms: 'Speaking of democratic centralism, let us put an end once and for all to its tendentious distortion, and its identification with such offspring of degeneration as "organic" and "bureaucratic centralism, which occurred later and had nothing in common with democratic centralism as it was defined and practised by Lenin. It does not amount to any rubber-stamped unanimity but to a method that is called upon, in the final analysis, to secure the requisite unity of the Party's theory and practice. In other words, following the free and democratic expression of possible differences, the opinion of the majority becomes the standpoint of the whole Party' (see *Repubblica*, July 1978).

The following passage by Georges Marchais may also be of interest: 'As concerns democratic centralism, you must agree with me that in this difficult period it is demonstrating its considerable superiority to the modes of action of the other political parties. Thus, for many years we have not expelled a single member, and have not dissolved any of our federations or sections... On the contrary, democratic centralism enables us to discuss all problems freely in order for all to find the best solution. Any other conduct of affairs leads to sclerosis. That is our opinion' (*Le Monde*, 2 March 1978).

Now, let us turn back to the philosophical arguments the pluralists employ to give their cause worldwide relevance and a strong foundation. They are set out fairly thoroughly in the prodigious volume produced on the subject by U. S. politologist Robert A. Dahl. He maintains that since the social conflicts originate in human nature and since people have not yet found any

means of coexisting without conflict, democracy must inevitably be of a pluralist character.\*

Dahl has discovered nothing new. The theory of conflict has for years preoccupied bourgeois political thinking, with various versions of it being advanced by such of its stalwarts as Weber, Mannheim, Schumpeter, Dahrendorf, and others.

Ralf Dahrendorf writes, for example, that society is above all domination and, consequently, always coercion, a definite estrangement (the tragic paradox of the social contract on domination) and, furthermore, conflict and flux (*Dahrendorf, Gesellschaft und Freiheit*? Piper & Co. Verlag, Munich, 1961, pp. 334-5).

Depending on their political leanings, some exponents of this theory declare themselves post- or neo-Marxists. For these two reasons: first, the outward resemblance of the theory of conflict with the Marxist theory of class struggle and, second, the apparent identity of method, with political ideas and institutions deduced from the economic basis and society's social structure.

But the resemblance is only outward, and the identity only seeming. The theory of scientific communism says that the class struggle between exploiters and exploited is the chief motor of any antagonistic society and ultimately determines the revolutionary conversion of capitalism into socialism. The theory of conflict, on the other hand, fails to define the basic class contradiction, and in effect identifies the collision of the antagonistic classes with the many other forms of conflict (between and inside classes, and some outside classes) that may, it is true, be fairly acute but never the impulse for the substitution of one social system for another.

Unlike Marxism-Leninism, the theory of conflict minimises the relevance of the class struggle, dissolving it in a sea of other contradictions. And by declaring these contradictions as derivative primarily from human nature and, consequently, as everlasting and insuperable, it is also contrary to the methodology of dialectical and historical materialism. In other words, the theory is neither post- nor neo-Marxist, but anti-Marxist.

The shaky theoretical grounding of pluralism, portrayed as the ultimate political pattern, is recognised by those Western scholars who specialise in criticising Marxism and have taken the trouble to study it. Klaus von Beyme, professor of political science at the University of Heidelberg, warns that the alternatives of 'pluralism', 'limited pluralism' or 'no pluralism' are rare, and that

\* Dahl, *Pluralist Democracy in the United States: Conflict and Consent*, Rand McNally & Co., Chicago, 1967.

there are different degrees of pluralism at different levels of society. 'Otherwise,' he says, 'pluralism would have to be restricted to one basic conflict such as the conflict between the factors capital and labour.' To avoid this, he suggests differentiating the various levels of society and testing pluralism in: the party system; the interest groups system; marginal and regional groups; the parties' public philosophy and ideology.\*

U. S. political scientists Ellsworth and Stahnke, too, prefer to avoid candidly propagandist claims that the diversity of interests of the different social strata and opportunities to express them are a feature exclusively of bourgeois-democratic political structures. But while avoiding one extreme, they go to the other extreme of classifying political systems not by their social-economic base but by what they term the sole universal indicator—the method of settling social conflicts.

Proceeding in this manner, the U. S. scholars single out two models, labelling them *conciliation* and *command* models. In the former decisions and support are developed through the accommodation of competing positions, as in a commercial deal. In the latter, they result from the exercise of 'social control', as in a military unit.

While admitting that the two models do not occur in a 'pure' form, because all political systems practise both conciliation and command to settle social conflicts, the writers declare that British and American politics are closest to the 'conciliation model', while Chinese politics is closest to 'command'. To the Soviet Union they accord what would seem a place in-between: they recognise the viability of the Soviet political system, through which the state has widespread public support and effective methods of identifying and solving problems.\*\*

U. S. scholar David E. Apter emphasises that present pluralist systems (in the capitalist countries, of course) 'concentrate exclusively on the short run, leaving the future to take care of itself. Suspicious of planning, they lose rationality, generate cynicism, and leave most of the population listless and bored with government altogether'.

As a way out, Apter suggests what he calls a distributional pluralism in which there would be effective interaction of

parliament, political parties, and information media, with a mechanism for reconciling different short-term interests and plans with the long term. This, he says, would require a 'pluralist' parliament with a lower house dealing in current issues and an upper house of specialists (he calls it 'technocratic') to deal in fundamental matters.\*

Leaving aside the details, there is the same flaw, a classic flaw of all non-Marxist social science, in the American professor's project. By isolating political institutions from society's economic basis (and Apter specially stresses that his 'distributional pluralism' is independent of whether the base is private, public, or mixed ownership), interesting theoretical constructions are inescapably reduced to well-intentioned but impracticable, utopian projects.

Still the above passages show that unlike those of their colleagues who are carried away by propaganda stereotypes to extol modern bourgeois democracy for its pluralism, the more serious Western scholars take a sober enough view of the theoretical and practical aspects of the pluralist concept.

At the risk of repeating myself, let me try and formulate a few general conclusions.

First, there is no full pluralism, nor can there be, in the essential sense (i. e., a system of free competition between social groups and their equal participation in power) in capitalist society.

Second, the measure of pluralism that does exist under bourgeois democracy (i. e. expression and consideration of the interests of various social strata) is not capitalism's gift to the people, but a concession won in persevering struggle by the working class and other progressive forces.

Third, democratic centralism makes for obligatory consideration of the diverse social needs and interests, but unlike bourgeois democracy, the socialist version applies not conflict but conciliatory decision-making procedures, which are possible exclusively in the absence of class antagonisms and require that the basic interests of all strata of society coincide.

Consequently, the answer to 'pluralism or democratic centralism?' cannot be one-dimensional. If pluralism is taken as just one of the principles of democracy, connoting opportunities for expressing the specific interests of each social group and

\* Beyme, 'The Politics of Limited Pluralism? The Case of West Germany' in *Government and Opposition*, London, Summer 1978.

\*\* John W. Ellsworth, Arthur A. Stahnke, *Politics and Political Systems. An Introduction to Political Science*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1976, pp. 163, 206, 233, 288, 313.

\* Apter, 'Distributional Pluralism—The Need for a New Model of Planning', Round Table on Technocracy and Its Controls in Developing Countries Under the Auspices of the International Political Science Association, Rio de Janeiro, 25-27 August 1978.

considering them in the policies of the state, then it is wholly circumscribed by the socialist political system.

Of late, indeed, one comes across the admission that socialist democracy is by nature pluralistic. But it is hardly necessary to use an alien notion to characterise the features of the socialist political system long known in Marxist-Leninist science and effectively defined under the head of class interests, interests of social groups, their unity and/or diversity, coincidence or contradiction of interests, their promotion, expression, balance and harmony, and so on. In general, the vague and ambiguous word 'pluralism' is certainly less preferable than 'people's power', which is clear and unambiguous.

If, in addition, pluralism is taken to mean obligatory change of political parties in power by the democratically expressed will of the electorate, then it is wholly natural in a multi-party system, and, let it be emphasised, in a society with an antagonistic class structure.

More. If the pluralist decision-making method (i. e. free play of political forces) is seen as a possible framework for the development of the revolutionary process, this, too, can arouse no objections.

Lastly, if pluralism is declared a universal political form (i. e. is identified with bourgeois democracy), then we would do right to recognise that it will inevitably die together with the economic and social system that gave it birth. Because in the setting of developed socialism there are means of meeting the diverse social interests—common and specific—through co-operation rather than competition of political forces. And in the classless communist society of the future there will be neither groups nor group interests. I am hardly inclined to think that people of the future, with their advanced intellect and lofty moral culture, will find no better means of decision-making than group strife.

One more topical issue of our time that may be viewed as a dilemma is associated with the artificial contraposition of the common features (i. e. unity) and particular features (i. e. diversity) of the revolutionary process in different countries and regions.

The question as such may appear abstract: need one cudgel one's brains over what has become part of reality, and would it not be more sensible to leave the answer as to the degree of unity and diversity to the registered facts? But the problem is really anything but academic. It has given rise to intense controversy, and this also in Marxist literature in various countries. The approach to it has a bearing on the orientation of the revolutionary and progressive forces, and on the choice and quality of solutions in the early stages of building socialism.

If we take the ideological aspect, i. e. the impact of the various concepts on the public mind and political movements, the significance of the dilemma is still greater, because fairly large segments of people in capitalist countries are still prejudiced against socialism for the sole reason that they think it connotes uniformity and standardisation not only in economy, but also in all other spheres, including the intellectual.

Decade after decade, bourgeois propaganda has spread the lie that socialism is by nature a joyless realm of dreariness. In addition, Marx and Lenin are said to have conceived forcible imposition of the same pattern on all countries, tearing down the traditional national make-up, ignoring the historically shaped distinctions between nations, and scorning local customs and cultures, habits and tastes—or, in short, putting the world in a straitjacket.

As always, bourgeois scholars, at least the most zealous of them, hasten to the aid of bourgeois propaganda and try to give substance to this 'forcible unification' by constructing a solid



philosophical foundation for it. This is done quite skillfully, I must admit, though at closer range the construction is easily seen to be a deliberate fraud.

In the previous chapter we have already referred to the attempt at raising the 'pluralist' concept to the rank of a universal philosophical idea. This attempt is prompted less by epistemological motives, by the search of a general theory for all bourgeois social science, and much more by the wish to discredit and hit Marxism. Pluralism is portrayed as a rational and democratic philosophical concept in contradistinction to the Marxist monism, allegedly irrational and totalitarian.

That diversity and multiplicity is the basic and essential feature of society's arrangement and activity no one can deny. But multiplicity cannot be correctly understood and gauged unless it is related to unity, that other basic and essential feature of society. For here we have one of those paired concepts that reflect the movement of society within polar opposites and must, therefore, be viewed in the light of the dialectical interaction of its two elements.

Any metaphysical approach to the matter will lead us astray, as it has the West German philosopher, K. Bosl, who said that 'pluralism in world outlook and religious convictions, pluralism in economy, politics, science, art, and culture seems to be the natural manifestation of human existence and human activity'.\*

Is Bosl right? Yes and no. Take religious beliefs. Anyone in the least conversant with history will tell you that powerful monotheistic religious movements superseded a large variety of pagan cultures. The fact that Christianity, Mohammedanism, and Buddhism are the most widespread religions in the modern world is itself an indication that there is an insuperable gravitation towards unity. Nor is this an accidental tendency. There are various objective and subjective reasons for it, including the resemblance of social conditions favouring the spread of the relevant religious doctrine; the attractiveness and quality of the church, the efficiency of its missionary, or more bluntly, its propaganda activity, and so on.

I may be told that Christianity has many different currents—Catholicism, Protestantism, and the Orthodox faith, to say nothing of Baptists, Evangelists and other relatively less numerous sects. Islam, too, is divided into Shiites and Sunnites. But this 'pluralism' does not refute the monism of the Christian

\* See K. Bosl, *Pluralismus und pluralistische Gesellschaft*, Munich, 1967.

and Muslim faiths. Furthermore, if the question is dealt with more broadly, there is evidence that all modern world religions repose on the belief in one God, and have fairly similar ideas about after-life, morality, community living, and the like.

This is also true of the other areas of social activity mentioned by Bosl—economy, politics, science, art, and culture. In each, diversity exists not as a counterweight to, but a complement of, unity. The two extremes do not merely coexist, but cannot exist one without the other.

Each and every unity contains diversity, each and every diversity contains unity. And if we were to go back to Bosl's above-quoted passage and replaced the word 'pluralism' with the word 'unity', this would hardly cause the reader to falter. Because in both cases the statement would be right, but right only in part. The full verity is that 'the natural manifestation of human existence and human activity' is *unity and diversity* in economy, politics, science, art and culture.

That many bourgeois philosophers cannot or refuse to apprehend the objective dialectics of nature and society, is a misfortune. But that they shift their own one-sidedness to Marxism, is a distinct fault. For what it amounts to is a primitive and undisguised play on words. The Marxist philosophical monism is a concept of the world's material unity, and to impeach it for wanting to make all things uniform is as absurd as, say, impeaching Newton's concept of gravity for wanting to bodily press all people to the ground.

If Marx and the Marxists were metaphysicists, one could indeed deduce a straightforward and wretched denial of the world's diversity. But the Marxist approach to reality is dialectical. The idea of the world's material unity does not deny but, on the contrary, presupposes the existence of this unity in a diversity of phenomena. More, this diversity also applies to matter, the fundamental principle, which manifests itself in different qualities and forms—as substance or as an oscillatory wave, as space or as time. The deduction of the material world's unity would have been meaningless if it did not also recognise the world's complexity and multiplicity.

To be sure, the concept 'philosophical monism' is conditional and not entirely adequate to the Marxist-Leninist dialectical world outlook. It came into use because the architects of Marxist theory worked on and asserted dialectical materialism while locked in struggle with idealism and metaphysics, and with various agnostic teachings that ruled out the very idea of any general

theory of the universe. Hence the natural accent on monism, whose other side—diversity—is taken for granted.

In short, the charge that Marxist philosophy wants to construct the universe of one material and to suit it to one standard stems either from an epistemological misunderstanding or from deliberate falsification. The crux of the Marxist philosophical monism is accurate reflection of the objective relation between the general and the particular, between unity and diversity, and between the essence and the phenomenon. And it is called monism only because its inception is associated with the discovery of a more profound unity in the diversity of phenomena and processes that had been observed before, and with the discovery of the *objective regularities that govern the development of nature and society*.

And this discovery, borne out by all past history, natural and social, is what the latter-day opponents of Marxism are warring against. They are warring against it, because it does not suit the political interests of the capitalist class. And since their position is shaky, they resort to the fraud we have already spoken about, and which may be presented in graphic form as follows: diversity = rationalist philosophy = capitalism = democracy = individualism = freedom; unity = Marxism-Leninism = socialism = totalitarianism = collectivism = equality.

It will be recalled that this equation, though in briefer form, has already been cited between these covers. That, in fact, is the specificity of our subject—its separate fragments are linked with another, and are derivatives, ultimately, of the same source.

This time, to avoid repetition, let me confine myself to just the general and particular ways of making socialism, and to the content of this new social-economic system. For that is of decisive relevance to the future and stands at the centre of the clash of various ideological schools.

It will be worth our while to look at what the founders of scientific communism said on this score. Speaking of the conditions that are implicit in any one-type production, Marx said:

'This does not prevent the same economic basis—the same from the standpoint of its main conditions—due to innumerable different empirical circumstances, natural environment, racial relations, external historical influences, etc., from showing infinite variations and gradations in appearance, which can be ascertained only by analysis of the empirically given circumstances.'

And here is a thought from Lenin: 'All nations will arrive at

\* Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1971, pp. 791-2.

socialism—this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life. There is nothing more primitive from the viewpoint of theory, or more ridiculous from that of practice, than to paint, "in the name of historical materialism", this aspect of the future in a monotonous grey!'

That could hardly have been said more conclusively. It follows for any unprejudiced reader that Marxism-Leninism has never had the intention of standardising the course and the results of social development. On the contrary, it bases itself on the objective diversity of the process of history. Marx, Engels, and Lenin laid special emphasis on socialism's ability to awaken the diverse national forces and have them enrich socialist theory and practice by their peculiar creativity. This they saw, in fact, as one of the key advantages of socialism.

But when Marxists refer to these and similar judgements, catching their opponents in *flagrante delicto*, the latter declare that irrespective of the wishes of the founders of scientific socialism, events followed the book in all socialist countries. And the reason, apart from the 'nature of socialism', was that Moscow had 'saddled' them with an identical system, reproducing that of the Soviet Union.

Where did Moscow get this predisposition to uniformity? Some Western political scientists say it wants uniformity because like structures are easier to keep under one's thumb and to direct from an international centre. Others hold the Soviets are not necessarily motivated by selfish goals, and simply follow the dogmatic belief that 'what's good for us, is good for the other fellow' or, in other words, are faithful to their mission as socialism's place of origin.

Given all these variations, bourgeois propaganda, the reformists and the revisionists maintain that socialism has so far done nothing but unify. Yet, historical practice, as well as Marxist-Leninist theory, have demonstrated the opposite. One need only recall, for example, how the People's Democracies emerged following the Second World War, and how they developed.

It was only natural, of course, that on embarking on the socialist road, these countries took advantage of the experience of the Soviet Union, which had by then passed several stages of socialist

\* V. I. Lenin, 'A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, pp. 69-70.

development and had produced some time-tested forms, methods, and ways of building the new society suiting the aims and principles of socialism and the vision of the founders of communist theory. Another thing to be remembered is that the structure and organisation of Soviet society, its chief institutions, standards and functions, had been designed by Lenin.

They may have borrowed some negative features along with the positive elements. But these were spotted and denounced. That it did happen was due to the fact that right after Victory, when the newly formed People's Democracies were a target of all sorts of forays and imperialist subversion, the communist and workers' parties that had come to power there had neither enough time nor opportunity to consider the distinctions down to the last detail, and to find all the right answers.

But given all that, the forms and methods of shaping society were highly diverse from country to country. To begin with, they differed substantially from the Soviet experience, because the passage to socialism was directed by popular and national fronts, which were massive democratic, anti-fascist communist-led movements. As Lenin had anticipated, Soviet experience did not have to be repeated in restricting the electoral rights of the bourgeoisie and allowing certain advantages to the working class, as this had had to be done in post-revolution Russia.

Besides, and this is noted by many fraternal parties, the young socialist states could rely on the military power of the Soviet Union to protect them against imperialist aggression, and on its all-round economic and political support, which enabled them to avoid tearing down the bourgeois state apparatus at one go, using some of its elements, parts and details (including bourgeois trained personnel) on a far wider scale than in the USSR, remodelling it, and filling it with a new, socialist content.

Nor should we overlook the survival of the multi-party system, which was adapted to the principles of the socialist political system and the dictatorship of the proletariat. With events taking their course and as a result of various twists and turns in the class struggle, the system gained a new content. Especially relevant in this context was the merger of Communists and Socialists, which ensured the absolute predominance of the working class in elections and its leadership in society.

Any thoughtful historian is bound to note the uniform methods employed in industrialisation, collectivisation of farming, and the cultural revolution (in the Leninist sense, of course, not the Maoist). Any thoughtful economist is bound to note the

distinctions, some highly substantial, in economic planning, labour incentives, accounting and control, use of economic levers and administrative procedure, price-setting, and so on. And any thoughtful expert in constitutional law is bound to note that the socialist countries took account of national distinctions in handling the electoral system, the structure of government and its organs, the activity of mass organisations, legislation, the judiciary, and so on.

As it builds socialism, each of these countries contributes to the treasury of Marxist-Leninist theory and socialist practice. Time alone can show how effective the various solutions are. And worldwide experience alone can produce the optimum socialist structure.

True, some may (and do) say that the diversity is too meagre. But that depends on the angle of vision, and on the political interests. It is obvious all the same that socialism has proved its diversity, and will probably do so again and again, and this on an increasing scale.

But back to the 'unification' that has resulted from the allegedly forcible imposition of the Soviet experience on the younger socialist states. Here is how Brzezinski presents it: Marxism was a universally applicable response to the 'traumas of the industrial revolution'; shifted to the Soviet Union in 1917, it was institutionalised and became the basis for the claim that 'the Soviet Union was the model for global revolution'.

The U. S. professor goes on to say that, what with the global diversity, no single ideological model can be universal. He names China as an example. And he concludes: 'This is closely connected with the phenomenon of global diversity, of pluralism, something which we, incidentally, very much welcome' (*New York Times*, 21 December 1977).

Small wonder that Brzezinski welcomes the 'Chinese experiment', which changed China's course 180°, aligning it with the international aims of the imperialist powers. As to his charge about the Soviet Union's claim to being a universal model, it is easily refuted by the example—yes, of the United States.

Everybody knows that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States had a tremendous influence on the evolution of the political doctrine and the practice of bourgeois society. But at the time these documents were issued, the United States was no superpower, and had no intention of saddling any other country with its standards. If the ideas of Jefferson, Adams, and the other fathers of the Constitution became so widespread,



this was because they were a response to the needs of their contemporary society and suited the economic basis and politico-ideological superstructure of the then ascendant capitalism. The uniformity of social system—this was what rode the 'American model' to popularity.

Later, when the U.S.A. forged into a leading place in the capitalist world, the doctrine of imperialist expansion took precedence in its ideology and politics, giving impulse to an undisguised bid for world supremacy following the Second World War. The belief in the superiority of all things American, cultivated by the reactionary press, has become so deep-rooted in the public consciousness that outward U.S. expansion is in all earnest understood as a mission of civilisation.

The agents of U.S. monopoly, along with hundreds of thousands of U.S. specialists, who poured into the other countries of the capitalist and former colonial world, became bearers not only of advanced technical know-how and the incontestable American gift of organisation, but also of heartless pragmatism, profit worship, the superman cult, and other negative features of the American way of life.

Though in recent decades there has been mounting resistance to this among other nations, and though U.S. propaganda has judiciously decided not to ruffle feelings and abstain from high-pressure methods of selling American exclusiveness and superiority, establishing a 'pax Americana' is, as it has been, the cherished wish and strategic aim of the more aggressive section of U.S. imperialism.

This you could really describe as a claim to impose 'a universally applicable norm'. As for the Soviet Union, a socialist state, imperial philosophy is totally alien to it. There is no room in scientific communism for anything smacking of great-power ambitions or for chauvinism of any kind. Chauvinist practices, in fact, as in China, are graphic evidence of departure from socialist principles.

To end my polemics with Mr. Brzezinski, let me ask him this simple question: would he say that the United States is more different from Britain or West Germany than the Soviet Union is from Hungary or the German Democratic Republic? I doubt he will say that it is. Which ought to put an end to the idea that Moscow is lusting to rearrange the world in its image, after its likeness.

Leaving aside the propaganda story about unification, allegedly the effect of the socialist order, we must bear in mind that there is a necessary contradiction between the general and the particular. To pinpoint the measure of this contradiction is to come close to the answer of what course developments are going to take.

Unfortunately, the problem is complicated by extreme viewpoints. One extreme exaggerates the general elements. Delving into the epistemological substance of this viewpoint, Soviet scholar Anatoly Butenko says that the dogmatic mind, 'inhibited against plunging into an analysis of concrete life, cannot tolerate the mobility of categories, and cannot comprehend the distinction between the particular and the singular, which are identified at every step, and fancies opportunism in the very admission of particular roads to socialism. Dogmatists are unaware that the common highway to socialism they depict, which ignores concrete conditions, is a lifeless road that no nation will ever follow.'\*

A convincing portrayal that evidently applies not only and not simply to a dogmatic mind. There are more than enough examples of people who, being right-wing opportunists, ardently champion the right to independence, to singularity, and to particular views, and who severely attack the exponents of unification, but blandly declare their doctrines to be the peak of wisdom that all others are bound to follow in due course.

What Butenko referred to was not just the dogmatic mind, but also the nationalist mind. Its topheavy logic switches with the utmost ease from dogmatic bullheadedness to revisionist impetuosity (and vice versa), depending on what is more profitable at any given time.

Paradoxical though it may sound, *the social and epistemological roots of the theories and political doctrines that exaggerate the importance of the general to the detriment of the particular, and equally those that exaggerate the particular to the detriment of the general, are of a nationalist origin.*

It only remains to add that in the first instance the nationalist roots go deep and are not easy to spot, whereas in the latter instance they are very near the surface. Any concept that emphasises the priority of the particular to the detriment of the general is, as a rule, buttressed with references to the interests of the nation, to its specific features, its sovereignty, and to non-interference in its internal affairs by any outside forces. In certain historical conditions and within certain limits this stance is progressive and reflects the contemporary level of development, the objective fact that the movement to social progress in general, and to socialism in particular, occurs chiefly in the framework of nation-states.

But taken to its extreme, to complete renunciation of general

\* Butenko, *Sotsializm kak obshchestvennyy stroj*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1974, p. 17.

laws, the exaggerated national (or regional) factor wipes out its progressive content, its theoretical authenticity, and reduces it to absurdity.

To believe some theorists, the socialism that will be built in, say, Western Europe, is going to differ in almost all ways and forms from the socialism that has been built so far. While challenging the existence of any laws or regularities, save perhaps two or three of the most general among the general (such as abolition of the exploitation of labour, and establishment of social equality), they bother little about proving their point, and much less about verifying their propositions. Yet, one of the most widely recognised and fairly well tested methods of such verification is always at hand.

What I refer to, of course, is analogy. Take the most cursory glance at the capitalist world. You will be instantly struck not by its diversity, but by the common features, the resemblances, the unity—in the mode of production, which is based on private property, in the exploitation of labour, the methods of state-monopoly regulation, the structure of the political system, the forms of government, and in many other areas of the social arrangement.

It would, naturally, be foolish to deny the distinctions, some of them very substantial ones. They make themselves felt in literally all spheres of society from production to culture, and they derive not only from peculiarities of the national character, but also from the history of nations, their geography, their material and manpower resources, and from many other factors.

But however considerable these distinctions may be by themselves, and whatever consequences they may sometimes lead to (national estrangement, strife, hostility, even wars), they are still *diverse forms manifesting the same essence*. The particular is not the antipode of the general. It is one of its many manifestations; the general discovers itself in the particular and in the singular. That is a dialectical rule one would do well to remember.

In sum, the existence of common or general laws in the capitalist world is apparent to the naked eye. And one would think it natural to assume that the same applies to the communist system. But French theorist Jean Elleinstein, for example, maintains that 'a radically different type of socialism ought to be elaborated (he means different from that of the Soviet Union and the East European socialist countries—*G. Sh.*), even though the same term is used' (*Le Monde*, 22 November, 1977).

If Elleinstein referred to a different *form* of socialism, there would be nothing to object to in principle and one would only want

to know, point by point, what exactly he has in mind. But he refers to a different *type*, even a *radically* different type. On top of that, he cast some doubt on the use of the term 'socialism'. For anyone in the least conversant with Marxist-Leninist theory, or in general acquainted with the language of scientific notions, this explicitly connotes a *fundamentally different essence*.

Try and fit some facts into this formula. Suppose socialism as it exists provides for planned economic development (and that is admitted even by its bitterest class enemies) and high economic growth rates, suppose it spares society such calamities as unemployment, and guarantees extensive social rights to citizens. If we were then to closely follow Elleinstein's formula, we should have to assume that the 'radically different type of socialism' connoted anarchy of production, periodical crises, a reserve labour army, and absence of such social boons as free universal education, medical services, social maintenance, and the like.

Alongside that sort of thing, Galbreith's 'new socialism' and Bell's 'post-industrial society' would appear as models of social justice and harmony. And I might add that the two above theorists do not hesitate to stress that many important parts of their constructions of the future were borrowed from the existing socialism.

True, Elleinstein may retort that by a 'radically different' society he meant not a radical deterioration but a radical improvement of socialism. That, indeed, is the purport of his discussion of the future West European socialism. He reasons that while the countries of Eastern Europe built the new society as they dealt with the problem of backwardness, the countries of the West will get off to a start in more favourable conditions, which will enable them to concentrate on more important tasks.

But he should then have spoken of a *higher level of development* rather than a radically different type of socialism. What a shame that principles and common sense are sacrificed to a fancied political advantage.

Taking the substance of the case, there is no denying that a high level of economic and cultural development provides preferable conditions for solving the problems of socialist construction. Though it does not mean that all will be smooth sailing. And it is altogether wrong to maintain that the problems will have nothing in common with those that face countries of a low or medium level of development.

'I have often written,' says Elleinstein, 'that the passage from feudalism to capitalism occurred in very different fashion in different eras and in different countries, and took several cen-

turies. I do not see why the same should not apply to the passage to socialism?' (*art. cit.*)

I'll be glad to say why it should not. As concerns the forms of passage, they can be, or indeed cannot fail to be, diverse. So far as I know, no one has ever said the contrary. The apparent simpleness of the French professor is, therefore, obviously a squirt of sarcasm at those who are said to be urging revolutionaries in all countries to storm the Winter Palace even if no such edifice exists in their capital. There is nothing easier than to vent derision at the simpleton one has himself invented.

But as for the passage to socialism requiring several centuries—here I will take the liberty of squirting some sarcasm of my own. First, a historian ought to remember the elementary fact of *the rising tempo of social progress*. The primitive communal system had existed tens of thousands of years, slavery several thousand years, feudalism some fifteen centuries, and capitalism only two or three. To be precise, the October Revolution, which ushered in the socialist era, was 190-odd years removed from the French Revolution, considered the apotheosis of capitalism. True, we could start the count from the British bourgeois revolution, which dates to the mid-seventeenth century. But that is not too long either by historical standards.

But why make a fetish of historical statistics? Analogy is a good thing, provided it is not overemphasised. Doubly so if there are other, much more substantial, factors arguing for the passage to socialism not dragging out over several centuries.

One of these is the present reality. In just a little over sixty years one-third of the world population has taken the socialist road. Something like the same number has in various ways made clear its intention of going in the same direction. And by all evidence objective and subjective conditions for a revolutionary change of the old society are quickly ripening in the citadels of capitalism. Is this not evidence enough that the working people (or the history they make) have no intention of procrastinating?

And understandably so: the need for socialist principles to govern society is making itself felt more and more. Only a rationally organised world with a humane orientation can properly secure such vital global objectives as ending the war danger, regenerating the environment, wiping out hunger and disease, closing the economic gap between countries, and marshalling the latest scientific and technical achievements for everybody's social progress. Socialism, as Lenin said, is knocking on all doors in the modern world.

But back to our main topic. Just as it surpasses capitalism in rate of growth, so does socialism differ from it in degree of inner unity. The capitalist system is wholly associated with the stage when society develops chiefly within its national framework, which also determines the system of international relations. Socialism begins its history in an analogous setting, asserting itself initially in national forms. Yet one of the objectives of the working class, and one of the reasons why socialism is inevitable, is that the new system aims at tearing down the national partitions, giving powerful impulse and suitable organisational form to the internationalisation of the world economy and of all other areas of society, and furthering the voluntary merging of nations in one friendly world community.

Obviously, therefore, the diversity of forms in which the socialist essence may manifest itself must not shut out the general tendency of the new society—the *integrative tendency*. The Central Committee report to the 24th Congress of the CPSU says on this score:

'Not only are we now theoretically aware but also have been convinced in practice that the way to socialism and its main features are determined by the general regularities, which are inherent in the development of all the socialist countries. We are also aware that the effect of the general regularities is manifested in different forms consistent with concrete historical conditions and national specifics. It is impossible to build socialism without basing oneself on general regularities or taking account of the concrete historical specifics of each country.\*

Marxist-Leninist theory has attempted to pinpoint the regularities witnessed in socialist countries. This was done, in particular, by the 1957 Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties. Naturally, the analyses of the common features may be better or worse, for socialism is still a long way from its culmination. We must not think, therefore, that the job is done, and that we have a full list of the laws that manifest themselves in all possible conditions.

Still, it is safe to say that history has reaffirmed the existence of a number of common or general regularities:

First of all, it has attested to the need for peaceful or non-peaceful, parliamentary or extra-parliamentary, socialist revolution.

It has attested to the need for deep-going social change: transfer

\* 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, March 30-April 9, 1971. Documents, Moscow, 1971, pp. 9-10.



of property in the basic means of production to society as a whole, and abolition of the exploitation of man by man (paving the way to the gradual disappearance of exploiting classes).

It has attested to the need for the establishment of working people's power, some form of state direction of society by the working class and its political vanguard—a party or parties espousing scientific socialism and communism.

It has attested to the need for economic planning, with the uppermost aim of satisfying the growing material and spiritual requirements of the people, and laying the material foundation for socialist principles in all areas of society.

Further, it has attested to the need for implanting the socialist and communist consciousness, combatting all varieties of racist, fascist, chauvinist and other inhuman ideologies.

It would be a mistake, however, to reduce the whole thing to the regularities of socialism as a *social system*. There are other regularities, determining its development as a *world system*.

As I see it, the most important ones, buttressed by years of experience, are the need for a socialist world system, at present in the form of a community of sovereign socialist states; the need for their equal co-operation and fraternal mutual assistance on the principles of socialist internationalism, and the need for economic integration, for a convergence of the socialist countries.

The close interlacement of these formulas, which reflect real and vital things, lies on the surface. The existence of sovereign socialist states determines some important features of the ongoing internationalisation, accompanied as it is by the development of national statehood. In other words, we see the two basic tendencies Lenin had pointed out—the flowering of nations in the socialist environment and, simultaneously, a coming together or convergence of nations.

Internationalisation may take different forms, including the antagonistic. In the socialist world system the process occurs on a voluntary basis, in keeping with the vital interests of all countries and peoples concerned.

To go about analysing or classifying the general features of socialism's development you must have the *right methodology*, and, above all, differentiate between the diverse forms in which the regularities and the various irregular, singular, even accidental, phenomena manifest themselves. Distribution according to work, for example, some said, should not be classed as a general socialist law because it is done differently in different countries. To my mind, however, the idea that distribution according to work is a

universal law does not imply identical forms. The same applies to other laws—the law of planned and balanced development, for one thing. It would be absurd to try and establish the same balance of, say, distribution and accumulation in all countries. The general relevance of the law merely implies that economic development must follow a plan and the tendencies objectively implicit in a socialist economy. That the key economic proportions will probably become more and more similar as the economies of the socialist countries gradually strike the same level, is a different matter entirely. Such similarity will result not from artificial unification, but from objective development.

What is also needed when analysing socialism's general regularities is a clear idea of the concept, 'diversity of forms'. It is often identified with different roads of advance to socialism. Certainly: like the road, so, too, the forms of a socialist society, at least in its early formative stage. But later the forms change, are improved or replaced by more effective ones suiting the higher level, or the degree of maturity, of the new social system. It is, therefore, advisable to distinguish the forms of advance to socialism from the forms of socialist development. Strictly speaking, the former are, in fact, forms of the revolutionary process.

One and the same form, it is true, may in some cases perform a dual role. An example: the Soviets of workers', peasants', and soldiers' deputies were the political form that put power into the hands of the working class. Later, they were the form of state power exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat. (The same is true of the people's democratic fronts.) But the Soviets have seen far-reaching changes: they became Soviets of working people's deputies, then Soviets of people's deputies. In other words, they are the same form that Lenin saw in 1905 as the prototype of future revolutionary power, and yet no longer the same, since they have now been adapted to the needs of the political system of developed socialist society.

If the difference between the forms of the revolutionary process and those of socialist organisation is chiefly theoretical, the next rule on the methodological plane is also of political relevance: *the need for properly evaluating the content of the various forms, and their correspondence to the aims and principles of socialist development*. As Lenin said, 'Form is essential. Essence is formed. In one way or another also in dependence on Essence...'\*

\* V. I. Lenin, 'Conspectus of Hegel's Book *The Science of Logic*', *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 144.

This signifies that to be the bearer of an essence (economic, political, and the like), the form in question must *put that essence into effect*. If we deal with a form that *encompasses* the essence, that conforms with it all down the line, its essentiality and content are self-evident. But there are forms designed to express the essence in part only, to give effect to just one of its features. Here things are less simple. Such a form has essence only if it is part of a larger form that embodies the essence as a whole or if it functions in common with other partial forms of the same essence, *is circumscribed by one essential system*.

The above is no academic exercise. When partial forms are separated from the essence they may lead into error in assessing social phenomena, and result in political speculation.

Here are two examples. In their many years in power, the Swedish Social Democrats have done a great deal to improve the level of life of the working people. Out of the industrialised capitalist states Sweden stands farthest ahead in social maintenance, women's equality and participation in public life. Falling back on these incontestable achievements, some reformist theorists, even some bourgeois liberals, declare Sweden a socialist country and pass judgement on the relative virtues of the 'Swedish road'.

Neither social maintenance nor true women's equality belong among the necessary elements of the capitalist structure. In fact, they are alien transplants. Both are unquestionably socialist forms more or less successfully grafted on Swedish society. But this has done nothing to alter its nature, to impair its pillars, which are: private property in the means of production, exploitation of labour, and social inequality.

Socialist forms planted in capitalist soil, fitted into an alien social-economic system, naturally lose their socialist thrust. This is not meant to belittle the social gains of the Swedish working people. All it is meant to say is that these indicators do not lead to the inference that Sweden has become a socialist country.

The second example is from a different field. But it shows like the first one that the content of any form has got to be taken into account. Some Western theorists portrayed Mao Tsetung's 'cultural revolution' as an action against bureaucracy. It was said to be directed to destroying the 'new elite' that had surfaced in China after the revolution. If so, however, why did not the 'great helmsman' begin by purging his own person, and why did he loosen the 'red guards' on just those people whom he suspected of disapproving his 'big leap' policy, which had, indeed, proved disastrous for the country? No, it was not an assault on bu-

reaucracy. It was *for* bureaucracy, for its extreme manifestation—one-man authoritarian dictatorship. The 'cultural revolution', like all the 'big leaps' and like many of the other elements of Maoist theory and practice, had nothing in common either with Marxist-Leninist science or the principles of socialism. In other words, it was the very opposite of the Swedish phenomenon, for non-socialist form, form even organically alien to socialism, was artificially grafted on to the socialist system. And though that system had not yet taken proper root, being still in its early stage (which, indeed, explains its weak resistance to Mao's rape of it), sooner or later it was bound to reject the foreign elements.

To close the subject, a word about the attempts to substitute the term 'model' for 'form'. If it is a question of experimental logical constructing (modelling) of some aspects of the socialist system, the term is in no way objectionable. But if 'model' is applied to some national road of socialism, it almost inevitably implies a denial of any general principles, an artificial exaggeration of the singular, particular, even accidental.

Roger Garaudy held, for example, that there were the Soviet, Chinese, and Czechoslovak models of socialism, and anticipated a French model. The underlying differentiation, as it is easy to see, is by level of development—medium, low, and high, respectively. In the case of France and Czechoslovakia, however, Garaudy explains the difference in models by the different historical conditions for taking the socialist road. France, he holds, must overcome everything that is unsuited to the 'highly developed' variant and that had occurred in Czechoslovakia.

This classification obviously predicates a multiplicity of types of socialism (not forms, but types) or, which is the same thing, the absence of a single system of ideas and institutions fitting the socialist mode of production. The idea is wholly untenable in terms of theory, for it leads to the inescapable conclusion that not a specific and single system but several are taking shape to replace capitalism.

Garaudy's basic mistake was that he declared as yet uncompleted structures to be more or less final models. The period of transition yields an abundance of forms (including some inferior or wholly fallacious). But the transitional forms are not eternal. The new system is in the act of *crystallising*, with its principles finding more and more fitting or adequate forms. And we can safely say that any attempt to denote different stages of socialist development by means of the term 'model' is in the political sense tantamount to denoting them as rightful out of the context of time. From which of

them, then, should socialism take its cue? Would it be right, say, to term the rape of elementary democracy during the 'cultural revolution' in China as a variety of socialist society?

The concept of 'national models' is, indeed, not far removed from the concept of so-called national socialism or national communism. The only difference is, probably, that the latter implies a specific social arrangement in each country, while the former implies the same thing in a group of countries. If either is pronounced right, we ought to assume that there will be as many socialisms as there are countries (or groups of countries). And, by definition, this means that there are as many capitalisms as there are capitalist countries or groups of countries.

But that goes against the facts, and against common sense. The only thing it can do is to destroy social theory, for it would make it impossible to classify phenomena of social life, to define resemblances and use them for generalisations, and so on.

It would be ridiculous to deny, of course, that unique conditions in separate countries do, and must, require some unique form of socialist arrangement, and this both in the transitional period and during the building of socialism. Neither can it be denied that similar conditions in a group of countries may call to life some original forms which may be inapplicable in other regions of the world.

The trouble is, however, that the model-builders of national socialisms usually endeavour to prove the permanence and invariability of their models. In effect, they refuse to consider the existing distinctions of form that are due to the countries' approaching socialism in different conditions and getting off to a start at different levels of economic and cultural development. As a consequence, they ignore, if not reject, the common regularities and the certainty that features of resemblance will grow as the development levels from country to country begin striking a balance, and the new system gains maturity.

Soviet researcher Butenko writes: 'Each country's road to socialism is an organic alloy of the general, the particular, and the singular, i. e. an alloy of regularities common for all countries. These regularities comprise the chief content of the transition and the distinctive means, forms and features which, compounded, give the revolutionary development of the country concerned its concrete, specific look' (*op. cit.*, p. 16).

The substance of the relation between the general and particular may be illustrated in architecture. When designing a building, architects consider its purpose, the terrain, the seismic conditions, the quality of the building material, national tradition, and so on,

lacing it with their own fantasy. With the consent of those who commission them, they may do what they like, but there are obligatory criteria as well, which any design must necessarily meet. The building must have walls, a ceiling, doors, must meet certain aesthetic standards, and must have the requisite amenities (electric lighting, heating, running water, plumbing, and telephones) and approach roads.

The same applies to all other fields of human activity. Science and engineering, literature and art—given the endless variety of schools and genres, they have their inexorable laws that none may violate without risking total failure.

Certainly, the nature of the relation between the general and particular is not the same everywhere. It is not quite the same in culture and economy, and not quite the same in economy and politics. It differs, too, depending on the class nature of society, or on the state of international affairs. In sum, it is a field of research in its own right.

Here, however, are a few basic points.

1. The emergence and development of socialism, like that of any other social-economic system, is governed by general regularities, which manifest themselves in a diversity of forms depending on the concrete conditions of time and space, and on the specific features of the revolutionary process.

2. The general, the whole, the single and distinctive, the particular, and the singular are indissolubly linked, and exist in a conflicting state of dialectical interaction. To raise this contradiction to an absolute, to ignore the interpenetration of these polar entities, is to perform an act of speculative violence upon reality and to forfeit the chance of properly understanding the causes and outlook of the process of history.

The answer to the question in the heading of this chapter, 'Unity or Diversity' is more than clear: 'Unity and Diversity'.



## THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER

### THIS BRAVE NEW WORLD IN NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

I have endeavoured to show in the previous chapters that:

—the scientific-technical revolution cannot substitute for the socialist revolution, and that techno-idylls in no way refute the Marxist-Leninist postulate that socialism is inevitable;

—there is no convergence of the two social systems, but an internationalisation of society's life and a continuing accumulation of premises for the victory of the new system on a world scale;

—the social-democratic concept of a 'third way' does not stand up to criticism and cannot be a serious alternative to the programmatic ideas of scientific communism;

—despite the attempts to counterpose the ways of social development and the values of being, social progress and scientific-technical progress, justice and efficiency, all these things interact and complement each other.

One more important task is left, that of *evaluating the non-Marxist theories of social development as one whole*.

There is, perhaps, a way of doing so without overstretching the point: to look at them through the magnifying glass of the anti-utopias. And best suited for the purpose are the novels of Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, and of George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

To begin with, they are among the most popular works of this kind in the West, and are extensively used in the current battle of ideas.

Second, 1984 is for us practically the present day, and we are able to see to what extent and where Orwell's ominous predictions are coming true.

Third, the anti-utopias of Huxley and Orwell project to the future the negative tendencies of technicality along with the dread of collectivism experienced by the bourgeois mentality. This helps

to distinguish the strong and weak points of the liberal political tradition.

The latter manifests itself in a paradox: the novelists described *not quite or not at all the society they had in mind*. The reasons will be clear if we put our finger on the ideological quintessence of the *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and compare it with the world as it is.

True, certain simplicism is unavoidable, because we are dealing not with treatises but with imaginative writing where ideas are clad in images and the writers' thinking is not necessarily conveyed in the dialogue, but by the atmosphere of the narrative.

Nor must we overlook the differences between the two novels. Though their authors come from the same social milieu (prosperous British intellectuals whose views were shaped in Oxford, or Cambridge, or Eton), their outlooks differ, and this quite substantially. Huxley represents the liberal-democratic trend, while Orwell might be classed as a supporter of right-wing socialism. Huxley is largely a philosopher, and the literary principle predominates in him, while Orwell is a political writer and publicist.

Besides, *Brave New World* was written in 1932, before Hitler's coming to power, while *Nineteen Eighty-Four* appeared in 1949, that is, after the Second World War, when people already had a conclusive knowledge of fascism. Needless to say, this one fact predetermined the dissimilar colouring of the future: cheerful pink with Huxley, and mourning black with Orwell.

But the pinkishness of *Brave New World*—and that's the point—is nothing but the lining of the black frock-coat that Orwell has hung on the society of 1984. Given different schemes and even a considerable distance in time (for Huxley set his anti-utopia in approximately 2500), there are coincidences at some of the nodal points that give the two novels a common denominator.

*Total organisation* is the first component. To say nothing of production and distribution of both material and cultural benefits, science, literature, art, life-style, family, and all other aspects of life and activity are worked into a single mechanism that follows an established order and is directed by a supreme will. Practically no borderline exists between the personal and social. Since the omnipresent state organises the entertainment industry, it handles the leisure of its citizens or, more properly, its subjects, as it sees fit.

The chief feature of any such super-organisation is that it becomes an aim in itself. And precisely that is the pattern of the 'brave new world' and the society of 1984. Though the declared of-

ficial aim of the state is universal well-being and happiness, its activity is chiefly concentrated on self-preservation. This is seen from the fact that the ruling elite (the ten Controllers in Huxley's novel and the mysterious Big Brother and his closest associates in Orwell's) subjects its will and passion to a mystical 'common interest' which, in some inscrutable way, suits the true interests of none. Unlike the usual type of leader, someone with charisma or an ordinary dictator, these ruling elites formulate no goals and extract no special benefits from their exalted position.

Despite the seeming lack of control over the supreme authority, it is something like an automatic control unit built into the machine, and is ultimately just one of its parts. And everybody—from those at the bottom of the pyramid to the rulers—are slaves of this state machine. Typically, some members of the ruling elite, like Mustapha Mond in *Brave New World* and O'Brien in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, have fairly sound views of everything and are aware of the injustices of the established order. But it never occurs to them that something could be done to alter matters. After all, can a little bolt venture to attack the machine? And the dictators in the anti-utopias of Huxley and Orwell are no more than bolts, if of a slightly larger size than the others.

The total subordination of the machine to the goal of maintaining the status quo is also seen in other areas of the social structure. The 'anti-utopian' societies are divided into classes or castes, and the division is fairly rigid, with any social mobility being practically ruled out.

In Huxley's *Brave New World* social mobility is ruled out physiologically. The 'proliferation' of the species is of an industrial kind and by artificial means, with all new-born individuals put into castes beforehand. Chemistry, hypnopædium, and a refined educational system give them the requisite qualities.

There are five castes in the 'brave new world'—alphas, bettas, gammas, deltas, and epsilons, while the orwellian society consists of essentially two classes—the controllers and the controlled.

The social structure is much like that of feudal and capitalist society, but differs from the latter in one highly-pertinent point: its upper stratum exists not for enjoying life at the expense of the labour of the exploited mass. Though its position gives it certain advantages (like the daily ration of ill-smelling gin of which the orwellian proletarians cannot even dare to dream), it is forced into the same circumstances as all the others.

Briefly, the social hierarchy yields practically no consequences. The white and blue collars differ by the nature of their functions,

the place they are allotted at one and the same state-operated conveyor. Both are condemned to the role of passive performers and are equally estranged from their human essence. The functional implications of the social stratification are, moreover, emphasised by the fact that division into castes occurs not by virtue of origin or inheritance, but is, in substance, accidental.

The consequence of this total organisation is a sweeping unification of people within the boundary of their social stratum. With few exceptions, they shed the distinguishing features of personality and become as alike as, say, nails. This, of course, suits the optimum pattern of production, organised as a conveyor. And there is not a soul that gives thought to the damage done through the absolute suppression of the creative principle, and the artificial 'levelling' of man.

For what purpose? The aim of the system is not in perfecting and passing on to higher stages of progress. It is reduced to a cyclical reproduction of the conditions of its existence. And those of its members who, by some divine revelation, suddenly grasp the true meaning of life and the preordination of man, are compelled to conceal their non-conformance at pain of death.

The next feature of the anti-utopian societies, designed by Huxley and Orwell as an immediate projection or even component of total organisation, is *total control*. The life of people, regardless of what social milieu they were put into by fate, is regimented to the least detail. Each step is programmed, and any departure from the established pattern, resembling the endless, monotonous course of the hand round the face of a clock, is instantly checked.

Control is extended to all fields of living, all areas of the consciousness, even such as would not on the face of it submit to control. But first on the list is labour, which is performed under the watchful eye of overseers, who are themselves watched by overseers, who, too, are watched, and so on. In short, there is escaping the rigid regulations.

Life-style is controlled. In every orwellian home of 1984 there is a spy—a TV eye that observes everything the inmates do. Two-minute Love Big Brother (and hate his big enemy) campaigns are held over TV, and it doesn't escape the all-seeing TV eye if anyone should fail to show the due ardour.

Sex is controlled. Here different methods are used, depending on the functional purpose of the social groups. For the class of managers, which must keep its ideological purity and intolerance of anything smacking of dissidence, sexual desire is viewed as undesirable because it immerses one in base passion, blunts the

will, and may distract from lofty endeavours. Accordingly, wedlock is seen as a necessary evil, while extramarital relations, even between single men and women, are classified as a grave anti-social offence, and the sexual energies of the youth are stultified through universal membership in an 'anti-sex league'.

In the proletarian milieu sex is another story. Here it is not only a necessary condition for the reproduction of manpower for labour and for the ceaselessly warring army, but also—and this is as important—an effective means of filling the few leisure hours, a sublimation of all undesirable thinking. Here, therefore, sexual freedom is encouraged, and there is even a special 'pornosec' of the information department handling the publication of cheap pornobooks.

In the 'brave new world' the control over sex and family life is still more complete. The concepts of love, family, father, mother, brother, and sister simply no longer exist. They faded into the past together with natural childbirth, and with the institution of the biological mass production of millions of gammas and deltas.

But thought is probably subjected to the tightest control of all. In the 1984 society agents of the 'thought police' are everywhere, and woe to the one who for an instant strays from his pious thoughts of the grandeur and righteousness of the existing social order, who betrays by careless word or gesture a seditious thought that flashes through his mind.

In the 'brave new world' the problem is dealt with differently. Why allow matters to go so far as crime and punishment, and why burden the public budget with the maintenance of special police forces if chemistry can do the trick, blotting out sedition from the brain. Alcohol is added to the test tubes where the embryos of the lower castes are cultivated. As a result, their brain shrinks to a size just big enough to perform unskilled labour and to rule out barren cogitation.

In both novels thought control is backed up by control over history. Naturally! Think of what would happen if some character, driven by curiosity, comes upon a truthful chronicle of bygone days, and the revolutionary thought that life could be different begins to spread like the plague. To avert this, history is, in effect, banished from the wretched assortment of standard knowledge. Whatever rests of it survive, are distorted in ways suiting the needs of the hour.

The day the 'brave new world' was born, everything that could remind people of their past was scrupulously destroyed—museums, monuments, books, even book printing. Henry Ford's

pronouncement, 'History is nonsense', was made the motto of society.

In *Brave New World*, in fact, the calendar begins with Henry Ford's birthday—the author's more than transparent hint at the 'brave new world's' originating from the soulless assembly line and the sweatshop pattern of late capitalist society.

The philosophy of the rulers of the orwellian society is expressed in the following motto: 'Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past.'

But how, one wonders, by what means, can these nightmare worlds described by Huxley and Orwell exist at all?

By means of *total deception*.

In the orwellian society everything is turned inside out. The conduct of permanent war is handled by the Ministry of Peace. The starvation rations are dispensed by the Ministry of Plenty. The Ministry of Truth concerns itself with lies. And the Ministry of Love combines the functions of the FBI and CIA. Equally absurd are the widely advertised slogans and postulates of the prevailing ideology (called Ingso): "freedom is slavery", "war is peace", "ignorance is strength".

But this juggling with words has its substance and reason. It is no mere exercise in sophistry. By deliberately crushing traditional notions, by turning the formulas of reason inside out, the governors rob people of ethical guidelines, and teach them to accept any and all nonsense they may choose to cultivate as an article of faith. As the Christian is forbidden to doubt the fantastic acts of the thaumaturges, so the people of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* may not challenge the pronouncements of the authorities, not even if the latter say that twice two is five.

Mere deceit is no longer enough. A set of coercive means and incentives is set in motion to turn deceit into *self-deceit*. As a result, though Big Brother has long since kicked up his toes, everyone is cheerfully convinced in the eternal earthly existence of the leader, and the same of his antipode. As a result, too, though the three surviving superpowers are occupied with their own concerns and almost never communicate, the people in each of them are convinced that they are in a state of permanent war, and to sustain this self-deceit the governors drop bombs of 'foreign manufacture' on their own cities from time to time.

In the orwellian world, indeed, self-deceit must necessarily be backed up by deceit, at least from time to time. But in Huxley's world this is unnecessary, with production of the human species put on industrial lines. People are 'manufactured' in lots, one like



the other, with qualities and thoughts programmed beforehand. Besides, 'desirable verities' are inculcated by hypnosis. When the members of the low castes are asleep, the thought is drummed into their heads that their social status is more than enviable, for in the view of their governors the secret of happiness is in making people delight in their social predestination.

In short, *total organisation, total control, and total deceit and self-deceit*. Those are the three whales on which the societies of nineteen eighty-four and the 'brave new world' repose. But that is where the resemblance of the two novels ends, and where the distinctions begin. And first of all over the question of genesis.

Huxley does not raise that question at all. His 'new world is, after all, a thousand-fold hyperbole of some of the traits of his contemporary capitalist reality. The genesis of his world is apparent. The writer addresses the reader in terms much similar to the terms of a mathematical problem: assuming that the derelictions of the social system we see today are allowed to develop endlessly, what will society be like six hundred years hence? Though Huxley's answer is necessarily hypothetical, it has its origin in existing tendencies.

No, it is not a scientific prognosis. Deliberately or not, Huxley disregards the factors that could hinder the emergence of his 'brave new world'. But neither is it pure fantasy. It is a 'warning' scientific romance or an anti-utopia in the classical sense.

Orwell, unlike Huxley, makes his leading character ask the question—who wanted this nightmare society of nineteen eighty-four, and why? The answer: down the ages there have been three kinds of people in the world, the High, the Middle, and the Low. The High were always preoccupied with keeping their place of command, the Middle with changing places with the High, while the Low, downtrodden as they were, could not even hope of any change. Then, in the middle of the twentieth century, there emerged an elite that discovered the way to perpetuating its power. For this, it learned, the standard of living must be artificially held back, for it stimulated political activity, and, in addition, absolute totalitarianism established.

In other words, the orwellian society takes its origin not in some objective circumstances rooted in the conditions of society's economic and social pattern, but in an exaggerated lust for power. Though, admittedly, passions and lusts may play a conspicuous part in history, this orwellian genesis of the future cannot be taken seriously. Orwell's novel has nothing in common with any scientific

prognosis, nor has it any claim to being a scientific fantasy. It is a sharp satire, ridiculing the inhuman social arrangements, and is in genre closest to the productions of Rabelais and Swift.

The novels of Huxley and Orwell are different not only in philosophical depth, but also in political orientation. The former, in effect, lays the blame for the perverted future on the capitalist system. The totalitarianism of his 'brave new world' is in a way the inevitable function of soulless technicality. Without it the 'consumer society' taken to its logical culmination would simply disintegrate. Orwell, on the other hand, makes technicality the function of totalitarianism. In his novel, totalitarianism, battered on Napoleonic lusts, is the rein on technical progress or the medium for its use to the detriment of humankind.

The responsibility for the nightmare consequences of totalitarianism Orwell shares out in so many words between fascism and communism. In effect, to put it more plainly, Orwell reflects in his novel the fallacious concept of some Western politologists who ignore the social substance of power, who give power an abstract, self-sufficient meaning and infer social relations from power rather than vice versa.

Why did a man who declared himself a Socialist write this novel, which has become one of the most widely used weapons of anti-communist propaganda? Because, I think, he succumbed to bourgeois individualists' dread of socialised property, the discipline of social labour, and living in a collective. True, Orwell named his nineteen eighty-four system 'oligarchic collectivism', but its vices he shared out equally between the two components of this formula.

Dislike of 'collectivism' is also felt in *Brave New World*. In substance, it is the same barrack-room as that of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, though thoroughly scrubbed, embellished, and varnished. But on second thought it is hard to say which is worse—to be an undernourished, downtrodden toiler or a well-fed, easy-going idiot with a brain thoroughly washed at birth.

We see that, after a parting of the ways, the novels of Huxley and Orwell again begin to converge. Both take an incorrect view of socialism and its potentialities. Recurrences of past vices they take for manifestations of the new social system, blaming it on equal terms with the exploiting system for a perverted future (if only as a warning to contemporaries and future generations). That is why I remarked that the two British novelists had described not quite or not at all the society they had in mind.

Indirect evidence in favour of this is that serious Western

analysts, spurning anti-communist propaganda, consider *Nineteen Eighty-Four* a novel whereby Western civilisation is trying to apprehend the changing world. Some of them hold that Orwell took his cue from what he saw in fascist states, that he produced a parody of Burnham's *Managerial Revolution*, and that what he produced is not anti-communist. Some analysts hold that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is not directed against communism or christianity, but against modern capitalist society which is anti-communist and has retained only the rudiments of Christianity.

These views do credit to the intelligence and perspicacity of their bearers. But while reaching wholly correct conclusions *in substance*, they ascribe to Orwell the wrong motivations. Because *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is, among other things, also an anti-communist pamphlet. That is indisputable, really, since the shopworn idea of communism's 'kinship' with fascism is repeated on many pages of the novel.

West German sociologist F. R. Scheck holds that the main thing for Huxley and Orwell was to prevent dictatorship, whether bourgeois or proletarian, and to preserve the 'liberal golden mean'. As Scheck sees it, anti-utopias are in general a product of the petty-bourgeois mentality.\* Probably, this is not entirely so: the *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* warn against totalitarianism, not against dictatorship, which is not the same thing. Still, by denouncing totalitarianism and ignoring the question of its class origin, the writers of utopian novels who adhere to bourgeois liberalism or petty-bourgeois radicalism (anarchism), tend deliberately or subconsciously to throw a shadow on the concept of dictatorship as well, and on organisation, public discipline, and control *in general*.

Yet the dictatorship of the proletariat is in origin and purpose anti-totalitarian and anti-elitist. The working class is not out to perpetuate its place of dominance in society. And its political rise, therefore, cannot be associated with any of the nightmares painted by Huxley, Orwell, or the many other anti-utopians of smaller calibre. The power of the workers, the working people, is necessarily structured as a socialist democracy, and anything that goes counter to this natural law speaks merely of the complexity of history, of the force and endurance of a past that so doggedly resists the emergence of the new world.

There is no denying that the anti-communist overtones in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* have their origin in the violations of socialist

\* See Scheck, 'Augenschein und Zukunft,' in *Science Fiction, Theorie und Geschichte*, Munich, 1972, pp. 270-1.

democracy witnessed before the war. But it is no more right to hold socialism responsible for, say, Mao's 'cultural revolution' in China than to blame capitalism for the wholesale executions of the Thermidor. In fact, capitalism bears responsibility for other things—the millions of lives lost in wars, for the division and re-division of the world, for the suffering of the colonial peoples, for the exploitation of labour, for the corruption of minds and hearts with the lust of profit, and for many other tragic consequences, of a social arrangement based on private property.

Remedying the legacy of capitalism, as noted in previous chapters, need long and truly titanic effort, and this effort had to be made in a setting of acute struggle against international reaction. As was also noted, the most complicated of all tasks was that of finding, testing, developing and improving the new forms of society suiting the principles of socialism and communism.

Socialism by its very origin means collectivism. But unlike Orwell's 'oligarchic collectivism', it is a *democratic collectivism* that reposes on the equality of people and the free, harmonious development of the individual. The supreme aim of the revolutionary era we are living in is to establish a harmonious relation between the personal and the social.

Take art. In a socialist society art becomes a public concern as regards its dissemination, its 'reaching' the masses, its organisation. This is an immense advantage, helping to overcome the isolation of the artist, the artist's exclusiveness. Art fed by the inexhaustible wellsprings of folk wisdom and creativity is no simple observer of life that helps people to understand themselves and the condition of their existence, but also an influential participant in the reconstruction of society in the interests of humankind.

But the public influence on the makings of art has its limits, which, if passed, tend to reduce the artist to banal mediocrity, to hem in his creative genius and, especially, to frustrate his yearning for discovery. The truth, said Hegel, is born as a heresy and dies as a prejudice. Any discovery, in science or in art, is a negation of hardened stereotypes and of the ordinary reason. It is inconceivable without free scope and latitude for the discoverer and without the tolerance of people towards what may at first seem unacceptable because contrary to established notions and habits.

It is the same in practically all fields of activity. That one optimum measure which makes for effective organisation of social labour, for sensible discipline that will not entrap initiative, that provides a favourable environment for the free self-expression of people in a collective, is needed everywhere: harmony of the

interests of person as an individual and the same person's interests as a particle of society; between the interests of a young person and the same person's interests at an advanced age; and between the great diversity of public, group and individual interests that comprise the 'charge of energy' of modern society.

It stands to reason that harmony in these things, like any other unity of opposites, cannot be a stable condition, and must rather be a *continuous chase after an elusive goal* much like Faust's longing to stop time ('Abide, you are so fair'). That is as it should be. The state of harmony of contradictory interests is inconstant. It is subject to variations depending on the change of numerous factors, and, above all, of the level of the productive forces, the relations of production, and the public consciousness.

In other words, *socialism is developing in a direction that is diametrically opposite to the one that might have led to the nightmare society of nineteen eighty-four or the 'brave new world'. Its future is different.*

But what about capitalism? Out of all the things humanity has experienced in its long history, the closest to the nightmare anti-utopias was the fascist order. Indeed, as we have already noted, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is in many ways a projection of that order some years ahead. Remembering the gas chambers of Oswiecim and Majdanek, the tragedy of Khatyn, Lidice and Oradour, one strikes on the thought that Orwell's imagination had not gone very far ahead of its time. Compared with Hitler's Third Reich, his Oceania even seems less repugnant.

History has shown that capitalism is, indeed, liable to breed the totalitarian and inhuman system we are being warned against by the novelists. But history has also shown that this isn't always so: the fascist plague that spread to half Europe proved unable to take root in a number of developed capitalist states with stable bourgeois-democratic traditions which, indeed, paved the way for the emergence of the anti-Hitler coalition.

This, on the face of it incomprehensible, phenomenon is explained by the law Lenin discovered on the ununiform development of capitalism from country to country and the consequent ununiformity of the ripening of revolutionary situations. Capitalism resorts to extreme measures only when its rule is directly jeopardised. In the interwar period this occurred in Italy, Spain and Germany. The monopolies put Hitler in the Imperial Chancellor's chair not because they were charmed by his ways, but because they saw no other means of stopping Ernst Thälmann and his Communist Party.

More precisely, capitalism's gravitation towards totalitarian methods is a direct *reaction* to any grave danger to its supremacy coming from the revolutionary movement (hence, too, the use of the word 'reaction' as a synonym of the social force hostile to, and persecuting, the working people). But such reaction becomes permanent, not sporadic or singular, in the era of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism. That, indeed, is the meaning of Lenin's description of imperialism's political superstructure as a *turn to reaction*.

To sum up, a) in the last stage of capitalism there is a general tendency to resort to violence in safeguarding the rule of the monopoly bourgeoisie, coupled with refined methods of deceit; b) where this proves insufficient, attempts are made to crush the revolutionary movement by means of a terrorist dictatorship.

Let's see if we can't, if only in outline, trace back any of the features of the soulless technical and totalitarian structure portrayed by Huxley and Orwell. And let's do it on the strength of what Western theorists have to say on this score with their first-hand, inside view of the capitalist system.

One of the most conspicuous features on the present-day political scene in the capitalist states is the continuously growing *interference by the state in people's private lives* for what are termed national security reasons. U. S. publicist John Curtis Raines notes that there is a reversal of public and private worlds, with things that ought to be of public interest being secreted into closed systems of private benefit. This plays havoc with the idea of citizenship and turns people into 'passive system inhabitants' or 'subjects of bureaucratic manipulation'.

The bureaucratic form of organising society hostile to the spirit of individual freedom, Raines observes, has been computerised. The 'computerised society', working on the anti-humanitarian principles of profit and efficiency, makes personal lives increasingly 'transparent' for the government and commercial elites. Americans are inmates of a dossier prison where nothing can be done without leaving a record. Living in that 'transparent' society, confined to the dossier prison, is living under surveillance, never sure that you are not being observed in a distorting mirror. Our own place, the inner space of persons, Raines writes, is like a colonial territory to the external system of social explanation and reward.\*

\* See Raines, *Attack on Privacy*, Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1974, pp. 11, 12, 16-28, 49, 50.



Among the incursions of the 'inner space of persons' Raines lists the close to penitentiary control over true and false mental patients, the sticking on of labels by IQ tests, and the humiliation of relief beneficiaries who must inform the authorities of virtually every step they take.

Another U. S. scholar, B. Severn, examines problems showing how far the control over privacy has gone. He quotes Michigan University professor A. Miller as saying that the dossier dictatorship, the dictatorship of files and records, may prove as oppressive and nightmarish as the dictatorships established by the soldier's boot, tanks and machine-guns.\*

A few facts. The state police in the U.S.A. have computer systems switched into an F.B.I.-run central system. The E.B.I. is able to gather, store, and retrieve when necessary incriminating evidence against practically all citizens. According to sociologist James F. Petras, the Washington division of the F.B.I. alone has more than 500,000 files on groups and individuals that have incurred suspicion or 'vague misgivings' (see *Le Monde diplomatique*, August 1978).

And here in the opinion of U. S. Supreme Court Justice William Douglas, who warned that wire-tapping is an aggressive breach of privacy that escapes effective judicial or legislative control, leading gradually to a society of an entirely new model in which the government may arbitrarily intrude in the secluded crannies of human life (see Severn, *op. cit.*, p. 38).

The police and other authorities, as you will no doubt agree, do not collect files simply to know when to send birthday cards to U. S. citizens. The material gathered by wire-tapping, surveillance, and informing is used in the battle against dissidence. And this dossier dictatorship is put into effect by any means not short of outright violence if legal prosecution should prove bothersome.

Lynching has long since ceased to be a weapon of racists alone. It is being applied extensively against prominent political figures. Since the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865, many more U. S. presidents have fallen at the hands of mercenary killers.

James Garfield, twentieth President of the United States was killed in 1881, William McKinley in 1901. Warren Harding died under mysterious circumstances in 1923. John Kennedy was killed in 1963, and his brother, Robert Kennedy, a presidential nominee, died of wounds in 1968.

America's history of modern time could in this respect probably eclipse the history of the old feudal monarchies, which abounded in assassinations of anointed royalty.

\* See Severn, *The Right to Privacy*, New York, 1973, p. 3.

The method is still more widely employed against progressives. The past twenty years saw the murder of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, and many other political activists. The death of some was not even reported, others were portrayed as victims of non-political crime.

For all the general control, handicapped social groups come under the closest surveillance. Richard Pious, assistant professor of political science at York University, notes that 'every nation has its winners and losers. In America the losers are the blacks, the Latins, the American Indians, the poor uneducated whites, and others locked into inner-city ghettos or dispersed in depressed rural areas'.\*

One can't help recalling the *epsilons* in Huxley's *Brave New World*. To be sure, however, if the rulers of the United States finally succeed in exterminating more American Indians and in assimilating the rest of the once free masters of the continent, bourgeois sociologists will doubtless put this down as a credit to American democracy.

Alongside thought control at home, the CIA engages in global operations exporting the same to other countries and regions. Recent investigations showed that the agency, in some 900 foreign interventions over the past two decades, has run secret wars around the globe, and, to quote Taylor Brunch, 'clandestinely dominated foreign governments so thoroughly as to make them virtually client states' (See *New York Times Magazine*, 12 September 1978).

From the police point of view, the operation in Chile was a *coup de maître*. By now, all details have come to light—from the abortive attempt to block Allende's coming to power, organising sabotage of his policies, bribery of entire professional clans (like the lorry drivers), subversive activity, assassinations of prominent personalities, down to the *finale* of the Chilean tragedy—the fascist military putsch that culminated in the establishment of one of the bloodiest totalitarian dictatorships of the twentieth century. Encouraged by this, the American intelligence agencies are nursing plans of making all Latin America another Chile.

Another CIA operation was the attempt at preventing communist participation in the government of Italy. Former CIA director William Colby (in his book, *Honorable Men. My Life in the C. I. A.*) reveals that after the election defeat of the Demochristians in 1953, the most expensive secret political CIA action ever

\* *Civil Rights and Liberties in the 1970s*, Edited by Richard M. Pious, York University, Random House, New York, 1973, p. 3.

taken in a Western country was carried out in Italy (see *L'Europeo*, 2 June 1978). An army of false businessmen, 'free-lance' journalists, students, artists and actors, even fast livers, arrived to influence the situation, hearten the discouraged ruling class, and discredit the vanguard of the working people. Money was no object. They financed the Demochristians, the so-called centrist parties, anti-communist trade unionists, and the newspapers. They bought them retail and wholesale, as circumstances permitted.

The imperialist intelligence chief who paraded himself as an 'honourable man' admitted the use of means that, as he described them, were 'disproportionate to the aims'—in Indonesia in 1958, in Vietnam, in Cuba in the Bay of Pigs incident, and in the attempt to assassinate Fidel Castro. But generally, he added, the CIA used resources 'proportional to the aims', as in Italy from 1953 to 1958.

As for the CIA operations in the developing countries, these were carried out with extraordinary 'delicacy'. The agency filled the treasuries of parties it patronised so cunningly that the latter allegedly 'did not even suspect it' (*Jeune Afrique*, 8 April 1972). In other words, the quiet Americans have learned the technique of quiet handouts.

After the CIA activities were exposed by a number of progressive American journalists, its former chiefs saw fit to criticise themselves. Coby's self-criticism was nothing if not original: 'The CIA has never assassinated anyone,' he proclaimed. 'We tried on certain occasions, but we never succeeded' (*L'Express*, 3-9 May 1976). An extraordinary vindication of this organisation of total control and surveillance—low productivity. Yet even the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence investigating Administration intelligence activity was compelled to write into its report that the uncovered faults and abuses are not entirely due to errors or unlawful actions of individual officials and reflect the general state of collapse of the basic American institutions.\*

Let's accept this formula, and turn to another example of thought control, the notorious *Berufsverbote* in the Federal Republic of Germany, adopted in January 1972 under the official head of Regulations Concerning Radical Elements. They gave the authorities a free hand in controlling the employment of citizens in government jobs from the angle of their 'attitude towards the Constitution'. Nothing short of a witch-hunt began with civil servants, teachers, lawyers, engineers, university lecturers, and the like, being dismissed from their jobs.

\* See *Foreign and Military Intelligence*, Washington, 1976.

What do West German legal experts think of the *Berufsverbote*? Professor Hans-Peter Schneider of Hannover maintains that not even the Gestapo of 1933 had such resources for control at its disposal. And Willy Brandt, Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, who had been a co-designer of the law, has voiced the fear that the FRG might become a land where father mistrusts son, where neighbour suspects neighbour, and where agencies of the state spy on its citizens.

Several million people were investigated in connection with the *Berufsverbote*. Matters reached a point where supporting the programme of the ruling Social Democratic Party was in a few cases thought sufficient reason for dismissal from government jobs. Opposition to the proliferation of nuclear arms, to the presence of foreign troops in the FRG, criticism of the educational system, and so on, are thought 'legitimate' grounds for persecution. And all this is accompanied with exuberant rhetoric about 'the interests of freedom and national security'. As observed by writer Heinrich Böll, 'freedom and democracy are being slowly but surely strangled in the name of freedom and democracy' (*Stern*, 27 July 1978).

The anti-democratic tendencies in Britain have a complexion of their own. First and foremost, they are racial. According to social scientist George Brown the relationship between the police and the coloured population resembles a state of war (*Der Spiegel*, 31 July 1978). The so-called National Front, a league of racists, is expanding its activity with the undisguised connivance of the police.

What do some publicists think of this state of affairs? Citing numerous examples of violations of human rights and civic freedoms in France, Maurice T. Maschino wonders if this is evidence of a totalitarian system. Certainly not, is his own righteous answer. 'But it's a system,' he goes on to say, 'which, depending on the circumstances, tolerates or does not tolerate, permits or does not permit, provides or confiscates. Our liberties are at its mercy, because it is the system that has lent rather than given them to us in its royal generosity' (*Le Monde diplomatique*, April 1976).

Another French publicist, Leo Matarasso, commenting on the law on the freedom of the press, writes: 'The law is worded in a fashion that anything which may even slightly appear foreign runs the risk of being seized. For example, nothing can prevent the Minister of the Interior ... from forbidding the entry into France of the works of Shakespeare, or from seizing the Bible. A very dangerous situation arises ... and if a fascist regime comes to power

it will not have to modify much of the texts in order to completely abolish this freedom' (*Le Monde diplomatique*, April 1976).

The above referred to capitalist countries with the most stable democratic traditions, with hundreds of years of struggle for civil rights behind them, and with a full-scale structure of special institutions for the defence of democracy. In the developing countries within the imperialist orbit the situation differs but little from what Huxley and Orwell described in their novels. Papa Doe and his offspring in Haiti, Somoza in Nicaragua, Pinochet in Chile, and other tyrants patronised by the 'world's greatest democracy', as its admirers like to describe the United States, managed to eclipse the predictions of Orwell in their countries long before the sacramental 1984.

So far, we've discussed violence, leaving aside the broader set of issues relating to the condition and the social rights of people in capitalist society. Yet the connection between them is very close. The evidence of Bruno Kreisky, leader of the Socialist Party of Austria, will bear us out:

'At the risk of making certain people grind their teeth,' he is quoted as having said by *Le Figaro* of 19 April 1978, 'one can rightfully say that for its part, the West, too, does not respect human rights. With its 17 million unemployed. Certainly, this upsets our cozy intellectual comfort. But it is a fact: we are not able to ensure full employment. And that is a terrible political argument. The past, hasn't it effectively shown that in due course unemployment leads to the emergence of dictatorships that destroy the liberties which we are supposed to safeguard.'

Have you noticed? Kreisky speaks of breaches of human rights in the West too. In other words, it's another attempt on his part to ignore the different quality of capitalism and socialism, a new system called upon to overcome (and overcoming) the organic viciousness of the old. This reluctance and, we may add, this inability to differentiate between new and old, is the essence of the philosophy of right-wing socialism.

While bourgeois and social-democratic ideologues strive to identify capitalism and socialism by 'sins' relating to the present, futurologists do the same relating to the future. And since they find the totalitarian virus in all contemporary societies, regardless of their different economic and political systems, it would be logical to assume that in the long term the disease will become an epidemic and all things will be reduced to one totalitarian nightmare.

That, in a way, is the purport of the prophesies of West German

publicist Günter Grass. He maintains that all the existing and newly arising structures of power ultimately gravitate towards the 'oligarchic collectivism' that Orwell predicted for the society of 1984. 'Regardless of whether in Indonesia or Thailand the ruling strata are anti-communist and on these grounds totalitarian, and regardless of whether the power-holders in Burma or Cambodia define themselves as socialist and exercise total power by reason of their anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism, the increasing community of these states is that, given an interchangeable ideological dressing and an unprejudicially changing power-stratum, they tend to integrate into a worldwide collectivism to which the industrial states of both blocs ... are supplying the technological superstructure—from data banks to fissionable material' (*Die Zeit*, 16 June 1978).

A similar approach is found in Kalman H. Silvert's *The Reason for Democracy* (Viking Press, N. Y., 1977). While levelling sharp criticism at modern capitalism from the angle of 'classical' liberal thought, Silvert maintains that the split between the pseudo-democratic technocrat and the true democrat is not a clash between capitalists and socialists, or between the left and the right as these terms are conventionally used. 'More accurately,' he says, 'it is the opposition between authoritarianism and democracy, slavery and freedom, or, if you prefer, between genuine right and genuine left! And, he adds, the schism is worldwide.'

We might naturally wonder whether the exaggerations of Grass, Silvert and other prophets of imminent disaster, including that of an inhuman totalitarian social set-up, are really so gross. Even if the tendency of techno-tyranny, to coin a word, is inherent in just the capitalist structures, does this not endanger all humanity?

There is a grain of truth in their projections. That is undeniable. Capitalism's immanent gravitation towards authoritarian methods, given additional impulse by the self-seeking use of the achievements of the scientific-technical revolution, may put in question the very survival of humanity. The experience with fascism bears this out completely. If fascism or some new modification of fascism were to come out on top in the developed capitalist states, the matter of the future world community would get entirely different treatment from the present.

The danger is real. But we should bear in mind this fundamentally relevant point: having reached a certain degree of maturity, socialism does not simply, by its nature, negate the authoritarian tendency but is, in effect, the sole counterweight to the danger both nationally and worldwide.



On the international scale it was socialism that stopped totalitarianism as represented by the fascist states. Here, I refer not only to the decisive part of the Soviet Union in hostilities against the Hitlerite horde and the Japanese Kwantung Army, but also to the Resistance, which was in all countries powered by the Communists. And on the national scale, in separate countries, the same is done by the working-class movement, which acts in defence of democratic institutions and thus hinders the emergence of totalitarian dictatorships.

Many liberal, even progressive futurologists refuse to see the historic mission of socialism as custodian and bearer of world civilisation. Robert Sinai is a typical example. He refers with derision to the policies of the U.S. ruling element, who, driven by their blind anti-communism, 'only breed irrationality and technological idiocy' in their bid to forcibly reorganise the world to suit their idea of what the way of life should be. Here's how he describes modern capitalist society:

'The men of power irresponsible, ignorant and incompetent; the intellectuals live in a world of make-believe, engulfed in the waters of rhetoric and jargon ... the middle classes wallow in packaged satisfactions and are yet aware of being swindled; the workers are trapped in deadening routine and social desperation; and the young reject the society while having no real alternative.'

The American professor refuses to accept socialism as a force of renewal, and as a result his condemnatory diatribe peters out in the banal thought of history going in cycles, and of another cycle of decline allegedly looming for humankind. 'All human history,' he grieves, 'shows the defects and excesses of all values, reveals tension, imbalance and contradictions as the essential condition of all civilization and the source of both its rise, growth and fall.'

One more example. Sovietologist Alfred G. Meyer, an anti-communist of ill repute, flaunts the evidence of his prejudices in the title of his article. 'An Anti-Anti Communist Looks at Detente', thus lending the following passage added interest. He admits that blind anti-communism is of little effect, and goes on to warn that it may prove the undoing of those who are banking on it. 'In the name of anticommunism,' he writes, 'the American democracy has to some extent destroyed itself. The worldwide anti-Communist crusade of the last thirty years may have been for the United States

\* I. Robert Sinai, *The Decadence of the Modern World*, Schenkman Publishing Co., Cambridge, Mass., 1978, pp. 114, 215.

what the Sicilian expedition was for Athens, and the sortie of the mighty Armada for Spain.'

What does he prescribe the West? Simply, a more rigid observance of 'humanism' and the 'democratic traditions', and (of all things!) preventing detente from taking any deeper root. That this course would lead into a blind alley is something that obviously escapes Mr Meyer.

Now, let us see what Ossip K. Flechtheim, whom we have already identified as the inventor of the term 'futurology', fancies to be lying in store for the future world. One of three things:

1. Barbarity resulting from a total nuclear disaster and, finally, the end of humankind;
2. Neo-Caesarean civilisation much in the spirit of Huxley's *Brave New World*;
3. A worldwide federation built on truly humanitarian principles.\*\*

What the humanitarian principles of the worldwide federation are to be—capitalist, socialist, or a mixture of both—he does not say in his prognosis. (If, of course, his product deserves that name: fancy a fortune-teller telling her customers they will either live or die.)

And to end our excursion, let's take writer and politician Jerome Tuccille, who ran for governor of New York on a liberal ticket in 1974, and who is a member of the World Future Society. In his book, *Who's Afraid of 1984? The Case for Optimism in Looking Ahead to the 1980's*, he invalidates all dire predictions of probable catastrophe, whether orwellian or consequent on the population explosion, the exhaustion of mineral resources, the confrontation of great powers, and so on.

The facts he has gathered, and his comments, are of no negligible interest. He informs us that a number of U. S. experts had in 1972 predicted that by 1977 the U. S. Administration would be compelled to set up controls over the power industry; that by 1980 there would be severe gasoline rationing; that by 1985 there would be a massive depression on the scale of 1929; that in 1987 there would be a worldwide conflict over energy sources, possibly leading to World War III; that by 1990 the shortage of copper would be so

\* In *The Soviet Union: The Seventies and Beyond*, Edited by Bernard W. Eisenstat, Lexington Books, D. C. Heath and Company, Lexington, Mass, Toronto, London, 1975, p. 325.

\*\* See Flechtheim, *Futurologie, Der Kampf um die Zukunft*, Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, Cologne, 1971.

severe as to bring the electrical conduction technology to a virtual collapse; that the year 2000 would find the planet in the grip of an irreversible water shortage, and, lastly, that by 2030 a rising world temperature would cause the polar icecaps to melt gradually, resulting in the death of the planet through flooding. During the course of these economic cataclysms, civil liberties would be totally eroded in the United States and elsewhere. The shadow of totalitarianism would fall over the entire globe.

Commenting on this doomsday scenario, Tuccille maintains that matters are going in an entirely different direction, and draws the general conclusion that each time a peril arises and it seems that civilisation is about to collapse, new resources are found to overcome the difficulties and to secure further progress. He 'promises' that by 1984 the energy crisis will have been completely removed, and presents his fantastic picture of the future. Multinationals will reign supreme in economy, and wars will not be in their interest: world peace will seem to be assured by the end of the seventies. The upswing of science and technology, coupled with private enterprise, would pave the way to universal prosperity and a 'rational hedonism'.

Need we deal with his other predictions, which time has already overturned, at least as concerns the dates. What is important for us is that the book ends on an optimistic note: humanity is moving towards a semblance of paradise on earth, with the prophetic 1984 no more than a delirious fantasy.\*

Nor is Tuccille alone. There are many among the Western theorists who scorn the views of the prophets of techno-tyranny, who believe that the world is drifting towards a condition described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. But they do not associate their hope of a more or less bearable future with any socialism, much less its revolutionary variety. They pin it on the same old scientific-technical revolution. In other words, they are trying to escape poisoning by taking an antidote, and to squash the technological nightmare by rational use of technology. What they do not say is how to secure rationalism while leaving intact the pillars of the capitalist social system, letting monopoly retain its grip on power, preserving private property, and all its attributes.

Since they cannot (or refuse) to identify the chief obstacle to social progress, they cannot (however much they may wish) work out an in the least realistic and positive programme suiting the abil-

ity and need of humanity at the junction of the second and third millennia. This impotence in the chief area is a common feature of all non-Marxist social scientists—the technicalists and the anti-technicalists, the utopians and the anti-utopians, the optimists and the pessimists.

Having examined bourgeois and social-democratic thinking about the future through the anti-utopian prism, we have added grounds for concluding this book with the thought that opened it. Futurology in the broad sense of the word, meaning the non-Marxist concepts of the future, has suffered fiasco. Certainly, it has contributed to the gathering of knowledge about various features of the road that lies before us, and has voiced many a valuable conjecture. But due to its social class limitations it has failed to produce an integral scientific theory of social progress, or to reply to the question humanity has been asking itself since times immemorial: *quo vadis?*

The answer is provided by Marxism-Leninism.

In my previous book, *The Destiny of the World. The Socialist Shape of Things to Come* (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979), I have tried to show the prospective historical process of the assertion, improvement, and spread of the new social system. The future trends in international relations, which are an important, supremely important, area of this process, I plan to examine in my next book, *The Future World Order*.

\* Tuccille, *Who's Afraid of 1984?* Arlington House Publishers, New Rochelle, N. Y., 1975, pp. 105-6.

For various reasons (one of them being to economise the reader's time) I have said little or nothing about modern science fiction, which constitutes a large and important area of thought about the future. A string of books has appeared in this field, which has thriven greatly in recent decades, that are instructive, valuable, and contribute to the exploration of terra future. Certainly, the conquests as well as miscarriages of fantasy merit special attention.

So, it seemed desirable to me to offer a supplement, a brief pamphlet, about the mass-produced bilge that is passed off as science fiction, and casts a funeral shadow on the future.

### PROJECT MSFN

It was a quiet and fine morning, 10 January 2971.

Xanf was in exuberant spirits. The long years of college were over, he had his diploma, and ahead was an exciting job on other planets. His turn had come to face the commission headed by none other than Aliroz.

'My young friend,' said the eminent scholar-explorer, who had led expeditions to the remotest points of the Universe, 'your academic record is good, and the machine-analysers report glowingly on your will-power and psychological attributes. Since you have asked for a tough assignment, we have decided to send you to Project MSFN.'

Xanf could not have been more flattered. Not in his wildest dreams had he expected this trust. Outside a handful of the initiated, few people knew anything of the MSFN project. It was the object of mystifying, often ludicrously extravagant rumours. Yet no appointment was more complimentary. Only the pick of the pack were chosen for the job.

'You probably know of the Sakura Effect. It brings us close to resolving a formidable problem, that of materialising thought. It is still in the laboratory stage, however, and it will be years before science learns to control it. What you do not know is that for inexplicable reasons a giant burst of materialisation during an experiment has turned ancient fantasies into solid reality—not the scientific forecasts, which have long since materialised, but the wildest, often monstrous figments of a primitive perverted brain.'

'Does this mean that object MSFN...'

'Yes. It is a series of artificially reproduced worlds, deplorably real, which we have named Materialised Sci-Fi Nightmares. Now you know the measure of our problem. We haven't been able to break the secret of de-materialisation, and any other way of eliminating the chimera is ethically unacceptable. All we can do is isolate these worlds and prevent their negative influences on civilised communities. Also, with a view to subsequent action, we are making a thorough study of them.'

'What is my job going to be?'

'To investigate, scrutinise, search for a remedy, and give us your suggestions. But we'll go into that later.'

Aliroz got up from his chair, giving to understand that the interview was over. 'Only a few words more, my friend,' he said. 'We have faith in you, but summon all your courage. You'll need it. You mustn't yield to the influences of your new environment in any circumstances.'

'How could you think I would?' Xanf replied heatedly.

'Calm yourself. You will see one day that my warning wasn't superfluous.'

A month later, the young astronaut's friends saw him off on his long journey.

### Xanf's first letter to Aliroz

My dear friend and mentor, you asked me to write of my impressions. Now that I have come out alive from my first trial I can tell you about it.

A small planet of sci-fi origin, Logan's Run (LR), was picked for my debut. Following orders, I attuned my electronic transformer on the local inhabitants the moment I landed, reproducing in myself all their physiological features. I experienced no substantial changes, save one: a deep-red crystal flower glowed from under the skin of my right palm. I did not trouble my head over it, entered a giant densely-populated city, and began studying the environment.

At first glance, LR seemed a normal world: people went to school, worked, had fun; the technical civilisation, including Thinker, a powerful electronic brain, was fairly well developed. But soon I was struck by a peculiar feature: there were young people, but I met no one of middle age, let alone elderly or old. What had happened to the older generations? Before I could find the answer, a woman suddenly ran out of an alley closely pursued by a man. Uncombed, in a tattered dress, breathing heavily, she flung herself on my chest. The man, dressed in black, halted a few steps away, a weapon gleaming sinisterly in his hand. Stunned, I tried to calm her: 'Don't be afraid, I'll protect you. He'll not dare harm you in broad daylight, with so many people looking on...'

She looked at me as though I were mad. She expected no help. She was simply seeking cover behind me, as behind an inanimate object. Strangely, far from hurrying to our aid, the other people in the street shrank back, forming an empty space around us. On the other side of the street, onlookers gathered to watch the proceedings.

Then the woman pushed me off and ran zig-zagging along the street like an animal fleeing from the hunter. In another instant she would have turned a corner, but the man in black was quick. I heard a muffled report and saw a blinding explosion. A handful of ashes was all that remained of the woman. The man put away his annihilator, which, I later learned, is locally known as a blaster. The crowd dispersed.

In the days that followed I was an unwilling witness of many similar scenes. But I mustn't tire you with the details, dear Aliroz, so I'll try to tell you briefly of the things as they are on Logan's Run. The planet owes its origin to the imagination of William Nolan and George Johnson,\* who had predicted a disastrous food

\* W. Nolan, G. Johnson, *Logan's Run, A Utopian Nightmare of Tomorrow's World*, London, 1967.



shortage at the end of the twentieth century as the consequence of the population explosion. The United States government tried compulsory birth control. The youth, however, took this as a direct infringement on their rights and rebelled. The majority of the armed forces were under the age of 21, and defected to the rebels. Senators and Congressmen were hanged from lamp posts and the angry young men seized control of the country.

Then a young prophet, Chaney Moon, suggested destroying everybody over 21. His proposal found solid support and by 2072 the elder generation was exterminated. Moon, too, fell victim to his own idea on reaching the fatal age. The methods of liquidating the 'surplus' population have been perfected. Every infant gets a crystal flower grafted into its palm at birth, showing blue, yellow and then, at 14 (adulthood, according to local custom) red. The colours are controlled by the electronic brain. On the 21st birthday the crystal turns black, and the wretch is supposed to report for voluntary acceptance of death. Naturally, there are reluctant individuals who try to escape. They are pursued and destroyed by agents of the annihilation service, like the unfortunate woman.

By the time I learned all this, I was 21 and the crystal flower in my palm glowed black. Fleeing the men of the blasters, I came to ice caves where a few survivors aged over 21 had found sanctuary. Only the strongest survived, for the only means of survival was cannibalism. Then I fell into the hands of a roving band of 15-year-olds, buying my freedom and life with a chunk of my own flesh. What with all the experiences I had on Logan's Run, I still can't believe I managed to escape.

It has occurred to me that we could use the time machine to send someone back to the twentieth century and blaster the originators of Logan's Run before they wrote their book.

#### *The second letter*

Hello, Aliroz. I was almost certain my idea was impracticable. That was why I did not put it down in my official report. Our rules, I know, won't let us amend the past so as to avoid unexpected consequences in the present, though in my heart of hearts I hoped an exception could tolerably be made. However, what can't be—can't be.

Now about my next object—The Tower at the Edge of Time. On arriving there I tuned in my electronic transformer again and found to my horror that nearly all my clothes vanished. I was left in a loincloth and a leather harness of belted straps. At first I feared we had miscalculated and I had been dropped somewhere in the primeval past. But looking round, I was reassured. There was no mistake: the giant spaceships touching down on the little planet were technical wonders even by our standards, and the strapping young men emerging from them were dressed as I. I struck an acquaintance with one of them, by name of Thane.

He was extraordinary: his body was that of a gladiator, his hair the flaming red of bronze; he was an accomplished boxer and, moreover, conversant with telepathy and the occult arts. He was well-mannered, even gallant in his way (with the ladies) and professionally a space corsair who had led wild hordes to ravage and loot rich planet ports, like once the famous Captain Flint in the Atlantic.

Banding with him I quickly found myself in the centre of events and able to get my bearings. In this world, created by the imagination of Lin Carter,\* a strange mixture of slavery and feudalism prevails. The political system is of two basic forms: despotism and theocracy. Technically, it has the spaceships I have already mentioned, and the electric whip, a thoroughly efficient brain smasher. Nothing more remains from the gods that once visited the planet.

Thane and I went to an inn and ordered wine. Some bravo—an agent of the local

\* Lin Carter, *Tower at the Edge of Time*, New York, 1968.

Prince Chan, as we learned—picked a fight with us, but my companion's laser pistol and a few of his uppercuts disposed of him.

Chan retaliated by setting loose a pack of warriors and then sent a temptress of seductive beauty to deal with us. When this failed, he made a deal with Shastar, the pirate. Both of them wanted Thane, for he knew the secret of time, beyond which lay a fabulous treasure. By a subterfuge, the conspirators captured him for a time, but Shastar relented, for he was ashamed to go against his fellow-pirate in league with the arrogant and vile aristocrat.

Forgive me for breaking off, Aliroz. I must stop Chan, who is sneaking up behind my friend with a knife between his teeth.

#### *The third letter*

Greetings, old man. I gather from your letter that you can't wait for the end of the story. You have probably guessed that I expected to gain possession of Thane's treasure to finance the alteration of MSFN. But my plans have burst. I found no treasure beyond the Edge of Time.

You disapprove of my crude language, but in the kind of work I'm doing I have no time for linguistic niceties. When with the wolves, you run with them. I wonder how you'd behave in my place.

This is my third month on object Sexmax. Remember LR? Well, Sexmax is something like it, the sole difference being that on Logan's Run the tyranny was of the youth, and here it is of the women. Hughes Cooper,\* the originator of this lunatic world, maintains that the female sex took advantage of their numerical superiority to win a majority in U.S. Congress and establish sex hegemony. The male has been reduced to something akin to a work horse, or to an instrument of women's pleasure, and has been stripped of all human rights.

No sooner had I adapted myself to the local conditions than I was summoned before a seven-women commission, which subjected me to a humiliating physiological examination: they felt my biceps, inspected my teeth (to see how white and strong they were), ordered me to jump, etc. Then they estimated my mental powers, and then, to add insult to injury, put down a medium grading. To top this, I was turned over to Femautomat, which concluded disgustingly that I was lacking in sex-appeal.

To cut a long story short, I am now of the lowest caste, doomed to lifelong slavery in the mines. Health services are lacking, the food is meagre, all things stringently regulated and watched over by women warders. Our social bracket is not even entitled to an old-age pension: our only entertainment is provided monthly by generous 'hostesses', the counterparts of the pre-historic army harlots.

Hypocritically, this is meant to honor the Sexmax creed, to wit: 'Every citizen regardless of age, status or other distinguishing characteristics, has a natural right to a full sex life.' But what fullness is there if the selection of men for women wishing to marry is done by computers?

I have toyed with many ideas—expanding education of women, or inciting an insurrection of the males—to alter this crazy world. Or perhaps it would be a good idea to fuse Sexmax and LR. I wonder who would take the upper hand...

#### *The fourth letter*

Before I begin, I want to tell you that I am fed up with your petty reproaches. I need no lectures any more. And this is the last time I am writing to you.

I am on the planet Emm Luther, the figment of Bob Shaw.\*\* Its relations with

\* Hughes Cooper, *Sexmax*, London, 1969.

\*\* Bob Shaw *Night Walk*, London, 1970.

the metropolis, the Earth, are badly strained and the prospect of a space war looms big. The earthmen are sending spies over, but the highly efficient local counter-intelligence keeps tracking them down. The wretches are caught, blinded and put in a concentration camp. It is practically impossible to escape: the camp is surrounded by miles and miles of swamp inhabited by electro-lizards. To make assurance doubly sure, robot rifles make escape impossible. And you have probably guessed by now, Aliroz, that I, Xanf, associate of Project MSFN, identified as an Earth agent by my snail the moment I set foot on Emm Luther, have been blinded and flung into the concentration camp. True, they did not take me easily, for I have learned a thing or two in the other MSFN worlds, especially from my association with Thane. I killed several dozen of the local counter-intelligence, stole a few top secrets about their anti-matter research, and seduced a petty wench related to the local ruler. You will say I have overstepped my powers. But I don't care. The time is ripe for action. I have a plan. My mistress will help me escape. I shall capture power here, then conquer all the other worlds. That is what I, Xanf, future ruler of the Universe, say to you!

"The poor devil has lost his mind," said Aliroz, putting the letter aside. "We have lost one more fine operative. I wish I could lay my hands on those sci-fi writers!"

The members of the Council exchanged surreptitious glances. They had never thought the great explorer and humanist could lose his temper.

It remains for me to assure the reader that these nightmarish samples of science fiction were not tendentiously selected. In a Charing Cross bookshop in London this kind of fare is offered in abundance, and I took whatever came to hand (it so happened that the assortment dated to 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970). For that matter, it could just as well have been New York, Tokyo or Hamburg... The same paperback trash is offered in the thousands throughout the capitalist world.

It was not hard for me to perceive that this literary garbage is made according to one prescription: a pinch of pseudo-scientific idiom, another pinch of sex, more of horror, and a space-suit hero of propensities matching those of Tarzan or James Bond. Cashing in unscrupulously on the public interest in the future, science fiction has become big business. What is more, it performs a certain social function: distracting people from the anxieties of today (an *ersatz* for drugs) and breeding dread of the morrow. In effect, it is an attempt to spiritually poison the present-day Xanfs.

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